

AMERICAN  
HIGHWAYS & BYWAY

THE  
GREAT  
LAKES

CLIFTON JOHNSON



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# HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS OF THE GREAT LAKES

INCLUDING THE STATES OF

PENNSYLVANIA

MINNESOTA

NEW YORK

WISCONSIN

MICHIGAN

INDIANA

OHIO

AND

GLIMPSES OF CANADA







*On the shore of Lake Erie*

# HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS OF THE GREAT LAKES



WRITTEN AND  
ILLUSTRATED BY  
CLIFTON JOHNSON



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HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS

THE GREAT LAKES

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## Introductory Note

This book is a record of a search for the picturesque and the characteristic in nature and life in the Great Lakes region. For the most part I have kept to the immediate vicinity of the lake shores, but there are several digressions a considerable distance inland. I did not, however, in any instance, go outside of the district that is directly tributary to these vast fresh-water seas.

What I have especially sought was variety of interest, and an inclusion of all the more important features that give the region its individuality. Yet, this book, like its predecessors, deals with the rustic rather than the urban attraction, and has comparatively little to say about the cities. It is concerned far more with the rural byways, the villages, the farm homes, and the fishermen loitering by the watersides. Life in typical small communities and the personal experiences of pioneers and other individuals have large place in these pages. The history of the lakes and industrial conditions are touched on only incidentally;

but all in all I trust that the book conveys a vivid impression of what the region now is from a human standpoint, and of how it has developed from an untamed wilderness. As the volume is one of a series covering the United States I do not deal much with the Canadian side of the lakes. Only along the Detroit River where the two countries touch most intimately have I given any detailed attention to our northern neighbor.

These "Highways and Byways" volumes are often consulted by persons who are planning pleasure tours. To make the books more helpful for this purpose each chapter has a note appended containing suggestions for intending travellers. With the aid of these notes, I think the reader can readily decide what regions are likely to prove particularly worth visiting, and will know how to see such regions with the most comfort and facility.

CLIFTON JOHNSON.

Hadley, Mass.

# Highways and Byways of the Great Lakes

## I

### THE VALLEY OF THE GENESEE

**T**HE Genesee Valley in western New York was a paradise to the early settlers, and though the old-time seekers-after-fortune soon found superior attractions farther toward the sunset, this vale has never wholly lost its fame or charm. All along the river is much fine farming country, but the portion that especially gladdened the hearts of the pioneers was the forty miles above Rochester where broad and wonderfully rich alluvial flats bordered it on either side.

At Rochester are two mighty falls, and the power these furnish determined the site of the city and has been a chief factor in the town's prosperity and rapid growth. The more important fall is in the very heart of the city. Great manufactories and tall chimneys loom above the chasm that opens below, smoke and steam are drifting about, and the din of machinery and of traffic on streets bridges and railways fills the ears. The gorge continues for several miles almost to Lake Ontario.

## 2 Highways and Byways of the Great Lakes

As I was about to step on an electric car that went in the lake direction, it started unexpectedly, and an elderly German just behind me caught my arm and pulled me back. "It ain't safe to jump on no car that is going," said he. "Sometimes you get hurt."

We followed it to the opposite side of the street where we got comfortably aboard and occupied a seat together. My companion was an old resident of the region, and by the time we were out of the city he was telling me how he emigrated to America at the age of seventeen. "And I've been here forty-eight years," said he. "When I come there was nothing but big farms here, where now you see the land all cut up into little market-gardening farms of five or ten acres. They pay high for these little places, and yet the owners make money—oh! you bet!"

I inquired about the nationality of the market-gardeners, and he replied: "The biggest share of 'em is of all kinds. Across the road from where I live a Belgian has just bought, and he gave a thousand dollars an acre. I wouldn't like to taste that honey. I'm afraid it would sour on me. I own seventy acres, but it's rough, with deep hollows and steep hills, and is not well suited for gardening. Look—there is my house where you see that threshing-machine at work in front of the red barn. My son manages the farm now."

He got off, but I went on as far as the lake and rambled along a stretch of sandy shore. The air was

unusually clear, and the water was a deep blue in the distance, but nearer had a greenish hue, and in the shallows along shore was yellow with mud that had been stirred up by the waves or brought down by the river. Great snaggy tree-trunks strewed the waterside, half buried in the sand, and shaggy with green moss in their less-exposed portions. Here and there was a clam-shell, and there were occasional little white snail-shells and scatterings of polished pebbles. In the warm-weather vacation days the shore here had been enlivened by pleasure-seekers, but now it was early autumn and the beach was well-nigh deserted.

At the mouth of the river was a life-saving station with its staunch, white-painted boats. The life-savers are on duty from early April to December. Nearly all traffic on the lakes ceases during the winter, though the lakes themselves do not by any means freeze solidly over. The stormy months that prelude the winter furnish the most wrecks, but it is in summer that the life-savers at the mouth of the Genesee are busiest; for the pleasure craft which abound here have frequent mishaps, and the timely assistance of the government men prevents many a tragedy. Yet in spite of their efforts several drownings occur in the vicinity each year, and the life-savers always pick up a number of dead bodies that have drifted from elsewhere—perhaps as many as a dozen during a season. Some of the bodies are those of suicides from the falls up the river, and others have been brought by wind and current from

#### 4 Highways and Byways of the Great Lakes

more or less remote portions of the lake. They seldom are found on the shore, but are seen floating by the lookout who is always scanning the water. As a rule the drowned persons are identified. When they are not, the bodies are buried in paupers' graves in the Rochester cemetery.

On my way back toward the city I stopped at the home of the old German. The threshing engine was in the dooryard, and the thresher itself on the barn floor. Several men were on a big rye stack close to the barn passing down the bundles, and the straw came out in a steady stream at the back barn door where more men were stationed to make a new stack of it. A spout delivered the grain into a basket on the barn floor, and a man carried it to an adjoining bin. That growing golden pile—a store of healthful food significant of nature's bounty—was exceedingly good to look at. The rye stack had at first been as high as the barn itself, and on the opposite side of the great doors was a stack of oats almost as large that would follow the rye through the thresher.

The threshing crew consisted of five men. They went with their apparatus from farm to farm through the region spending a day or two threshing at each place. It was expected that the farmer would furnish about eight additional men and have ready a wagon-load of coal. These extra men were recruited among the neighbors, who were accustomed to exchange work on such occasions. The threshing crew slept in the

barn on the hay, but the farmer's wife fed them, and furnished dinner for the other helpers. Threshing begins about the middle of August and continues through September. I asked if the outfit was useful for other purposes.

"That's an awful powerful engine, boy," replied the captain of the crew with emphasis. "It'll go right onto a woodlot and saw, and it'll work on the roads, and it is useful in a good many ways. Still, it's apt to be idle seven or eight months out of the twelve."

"Everything's done with machinery now," commented the old farmer. "When I come here we threshed by hand, and reaped by hand, too. The region wasn't nearly so thickly settled as it is at present, and you wouldn't see a darn soul stirring on the highways some days. The land was covered with stumps—pine, chestnut, and oak stumps—and they stood just as close together as those peach trees do there in the orchard. I used to dig up the pine stumps and sell them to the factories for fuel. They were full of pitch and would burn bright and hot. But you couldn't do any splitting or sawing, the things were so tough and twisty. You had to chop, chop, chop. I got out one stump that made two cords and three-quarters. We still find pine roots once in a while. The plough turns 'em out, and they're good to burn even yet."

"What crops did you raise?" I inquired.

"Oh, we raised chickens and wheat and children, and I don't know what," he responded. "But I must

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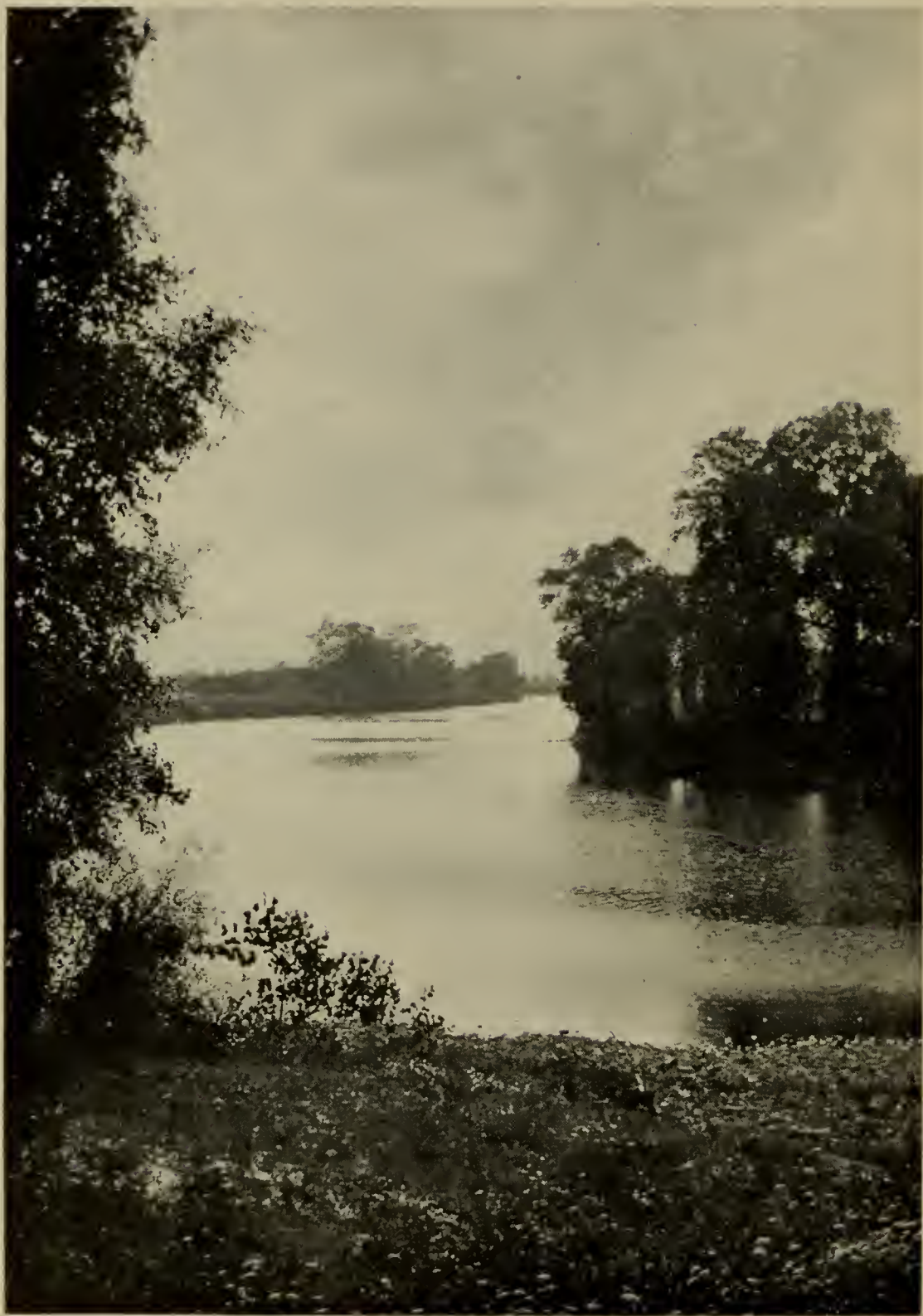
help the threshers now. There are nice peaches in the orchard. Go and take all you want."

So I visited the orchard, and Johnny, the small boy of the household, went with me. The sweetest and most toothsome peaches were those on the ground that had fallen off from very ripeness, and in which all woody fiber had disappeared and left only juice and flavor. While we searched about for the choicest I observed, off across a deep hollow, the farm herd of cows idly ruminating on a hill-top. Johnny informed me that one of the herd was a bull; "but he's a great coward," said the lad, "and I go in and chase him around with a stick."

An idyllic grassy lane wound down the hollow from the barn to the pasture, and beside this lane was a small pond with reedy borders, where a flock of geese paddled about. "I fell in that pond one day," remarked Johnny. "I got wet—awful wet, and I had my clothes on. I was ketchin' little hoppertoads. I went in head first all over; but I swam to shore, and Ethel pulled me out. She's my sister. My mother didn't whip me. She asked me how I liked it."

When we returned to the house, after Johnny had shown me the colts and the pigs and a pet lamb, it was noon, and Ethel had come home from school. She brought with her several girl friends to see the threshing, but after a little running around they spread a bit of carpet in the shade of an apple tree, and sat down to eat their lunches. Meanwhile the engine had blown a





*A bend of the stream*

shrill toot, and the workers had stopped for dinner. The stout, sweaty fellows washed up at a bench near the back door, and then went inside through the leanto kitchen, where the housewife was scurrying around, to a little dining-room beyond that was a few steps higher up.

I asked for the privilege of eating with them, but was invited instead to wait for the second table and eat with the family. We presently sat down, and when I had been helped generously to meat potato and cabbage, grandpa called my attention to a flourishing cherry tree that we could see through the screen door on the near side of the garden. "I used to have trouble raising cherry trees," said he. "As soon as I set one out my wife would begin to empty her soapsuds around it to make it grow, and that killed 'em every time. I thought she'd killed this, but I transplanted it to that spot where it wasn't handy for her soapsuds, and it's now a fine tree. I put it there nine years ago."

"Oh, no," said grandma, "it's not so long as that."

"Why, yes it is," he retorted. "Can't you remember anything at all no more?"

An eleven-months-old baby sat in a go-cart beside the table, and presently grandma reached down and took the baby in her lap remarking, "She's the best girl in town."

Then she gave her a spoon to play with, and pretty soon experimentally dipped up a little cabbage with it. The taste of the cabbage seemed to be to the baby's

liking, and grandma gave her some more, whereat the mother rather mildly and ineffectually protested, and then turning to me said: "You let a baby eat anything it wants, and you have trouble. I know I called the doctor for Johnny once when he was small, and the doctor asked, 'What's he been eatin'?' They always say a doctor knows everything. He don't, but he was right about Johnny. I watched the boy afterward, and he'd get out of sight behind the barn with an apple to chew on."

While the women were finishing their meal somewhat leisurely, after the men folks had gone out to work, Johnny came in snivelling and announced that grandpa had said he must bait the cows. His mother reassured him by saying that he was staying at home from school to take care of the baby and need therefore only help grandpa get the cows out of the pasture. "Yes," she said as he was leaving, "Johnny's supposed to be helping me with the baby, and he was in the house just once this morning. He asked if she was sleeping, and when he found that she was—'Good!' he said, and away he went."

The floor of the dining-room was covered with a rag carpet. This carpet was comparatively new, and such carpets are still often made in the region. "It'll outwear any ordinary manufactured carpet," declared the housewife. "I've got an ingrain carpet on my parlor, and it's only been there three or four years, but there's holes in it already. One advantage of this carpet is

that you can cut the breadths apart and stick it in a tub and wash it. It looks good afterward. Mother and I washed one last week; I wish you could have seen it."

When I left this hospitable farmhouse I loitered back toward Rochester along a highway that was bounded on either side by an endless succession of fields, with their celery and tomatoes, beets and melons, and other vegetables, intermitting with orchards of apple, peach, pear, plum, and cherry trees. By and by I encountered two ladies who had come from a cross-way, each with a heaping handle-basket of peaches. They set the baskets down to wait for the electric cars, and one of them hailed me with an invitation to have some of their fruit. "It was given to us," she said, "and I'd like to share it with others. I know when I'm in a region, a stranger, how glad I'd be to eat some of the fruit that was going to waste, if only it was offered to me."

So I had peaches a-plenty that day, free as the air, and altogether delicious. Moreover, a little farther on I came across a canteloupe by the wayside. It was perfectly good, except for a small soft spot, and it had evidently been heaved out of an adjacent field. I ate what I could, and after enjoying thoroughly its ripe and nutty flavor left behind with regret the greater portion.

On the other side of Rochester the river creeps along between attractive cultivated fields and pasture lands; but to see the stream and the farmlands in a more

lively aspect I went by train fifty miles inland to Portage Falls. Here was a country village with two hotels, several little stores and churches, a blacksmith shop, and a gristmill. A drowsy quiet brooded over it and there were seldom more than two teams, or half a dozen persons on foot in sight on the streets. Round about mounded the green hills, with here and there a road seeking the easiest way over a height, and an occasional farmhouse. There are three falls. To get to them by the highway one has to traverse a considerable distance, but a footpath makes a shortcut over a lofty hill. This path is quite charming, now in the open, and now meandering through woodland, and it even has a stile or two by which to get over fences. It is a well-trodden way connecting a small outlying hamlet with the main village, and is much frequented by school children going back and forth with their dinner pails and books. I fancied that originally the Indians must have gone over this trail and worn the first faint depression with their moccasined feet.

The falls are impressive in height and in the volume of water that passes over them, they have never been harnessed, and their voice is as loud and wild as in the days of the aborigines. Below the final falls is a tremendous canyon whose perpendicular cliffs and yawning depths would be imposing even among the Rocky Mountains. The land here is a public park, and it has not been ruthlessly invaded by choppers for many a long year. So there are numerous trees that





*Beside Lake Ontario*

have attained noble proportions, and the sylvan paths, and shadowed rivulets are delightful.

Attractions of another sort in the vicinity of the falls are an Indian council house, the grave of "The White Woman of the Genesee," and a typical pioneer dwelling. None of these rightfully belong in this particular place, but had they not been moved here it is very doubtful if they would have been preserved and properly cared for. The council house was erected long before the American Revolution by the Senecas at Caneadea, the uppermost of their villages on the Genesee. It is about sixteen by forty feet with walls of large, well-hewn pine logs, dove-tailed at the corners. The roof is of "shakes," or long hand-split shingles, held in place by poles bound with withes. The little window openings are barred with sticks. On the earth floor in the center of the house the Indians built their fire and gathered about it for their council, while the smoke escaped through apertures in the ridge.

"The White Woman of the Genesee" was Mary Jamison who was taken captive at Marsh Creek, Pennsylvania, by a Shawnee war party in 1755, when she was twelve years old. Her parents and her sister and two brothers were slain, but she was carried off a captive, and at the age of fourteen married an Indian. When he died she married another Indian. Most of her life was spent on the banks of the Genesee, and there all but one of her eight children were born. She refused to leave the Indians when the opportunity was offered,

and continued with them until she died in 1833. The log dwelling which adjoins the council house belonged to her daughter, but she herself spent much time in it. The large open fireplace and the chimney are made of sticks plastered with clay, and the stairs leading up to the loft consist of a sloping log with notches cut in it for footholds.

In my wanderings in the region I one day got acquainted with a villager who was whetting his scythe preparatory to mowing the weeds and grass on the borders of his garden. Early in our conversation he let me know that he would be seventy-six on his next birthday, but he was still straight and vigorous. However, he considered that his working days were over, and he labored only as the spirit moved, not from necessity, and was therefore quite ready to talk.

"In 1861," said he, "I mowed with a scythe twenty-six days consecutively. We cut all our grass with scythes then. The mowers would begin at sunrise and quit at sunset, and they stuck to that one job. There were others to spread the swathes and take care of the drying and getting-in. Later in the season I'd go from farm to farm and thrash clover seed with my flail, thirty or forty bushels at a place."

His interest in these recollections had caused him to speak with more vigor and noise than were really necessary, and presently an old lady who was pottering around in the garden interrupted him. "Felix," said she, "you needn't holler. There ain't nobody deaf here."

“Well, I’m deaf myself,” he responded, “and I want to hear what I’m saying.”

Then he resumed the thread of his discourse, and said: “We used to have a tannery here, and a wagon shop and sawmills. But they’re all gone. This country is depopulated. Pshaw! there ain’t a fifth of the inhabitants there used to be. It’s just the same all along the stream in the little places—the industries have gone to the cities, and the country villages are dead. There used to be plenty of work here all the year round. Every winter we lumbered it. At present there’s nothing left to lumber. The best trees was taken long ago, and we’ve skinned the woodlands until today ’twould be hard to find even a walking-stick. I cleared up fifty acres of woodland myself. The big timber I sold, and I saved some fence posts that I drewed to the depot at six cents apiece, but the rest I just rolled together and burned. There was lots of it that would be valuable now—you bet your sweet life!

“But no matter how much land the old-time farmers cleared up they kept a piece of the best woodland for posterity. It was the sentiment of every farmer that this woodland should be saved to draw from to keep up the buildings on the place, and it was sacred to them. Yet as soon as posterity got their hands on it they turned it into money and swept those patches of woodland off the face of the earth as clean as you could sweep with a broom.

"I've seen first-class pine lumber sold here when I was a kid at five dollars a thousand. Now the price is out of sight. The pines we used to cut would average three or four feet through at the butts. Some were as much as six feet. We wouldn't draw a log with knots in it out of the woods. We'd let it lie and rot. You'll occasionally see the pine stumps set up on edge along the borders of the fields and serving for fences. Those stumps will turn cattle and stock yet, though they've been exposed to the weather fifty years and more.

"What little woodland there is left now don't have half a chance on account of fires; and it's the railroad that's most to blame. There's a law to compel the use of spark-catching screens in the smokestacks, but the fellows on the engines pull the screens out in order to get a better draft, and when a train is working hard going up a steep grade you'll see chunks of live coal as big as your fist flying out. So in a dry time the fires not only run through the woods, but burn a good deal of fencing. It ain't easy to get damages either. Possibly the railroad authorities will give you wire for a new fence if you furnish the posts, and even then they'll act as if they were doing you a favor you had no right to expect.

"Yes, the woodland is gone, and with it the hunting. Until a few years ago we used to be able to console ourselves by going fishing once in a while, but there are no fish any more now. They were all killed off as the result of a flood and a freeze. The flood occurred



*A villager*



in July, 1902, and the water was so high the apple trees down on the flat only showed a little of their top brush above the surface. Crops were washed away and houses flooded, and more than one good farm was covered with gravel. The water soon went down, for this is a very flashy stream. No other river in the state rises and falls so quickly.

“After that big flood every sag in the flats held a pond that was full of fish, and the boys would go and ketch with their bare hands all they could carry home. An extremely cold winter followed, which froze all the flood-ponds where the fish had got imprisoned clear to the bottom, and not a blooming fish survived. Even the kids won’t go fishing now, and the only fish we ever see in the river are a few of these white suckers that come down in the spring from the side streams.

“Thirty or forty years ago all the flats along the river were used for growing broomcorn, and this was a dandy place for boys in their teens. They could work in the fields in summer, and in the broomshops in winter, and make big money. Now broomcorn is grown cheaper in the West, and we’ve gone into other crops. You’ll find more potatoes raised here than anything else. In the early days, if a man had an acre of potatoes, he didn’t know what in Sam Hill to do with ’em, except what his family could eat. He had no city market within reach; but with the growth of the towns and the building of railroads it’s different. We can sell what we raise now, though I don’t think the

potatoes are so good. For some reason or other we plant later, and they don't get ripe enough. You might just as well eat a piece of green pumpkin as an unripe potato; but the city people don't know a good potato when they see one—that's the God's truth.

"Last year a good many farmers didn't dig till the potatoes froze and was teetotally spoiled. They wa'n't worth five cents a bushel, and yet lots of them frost-bitten potatoes were marketed just the same as if they'd been all right. For seed they were no earthly use. If they were planted they'd come up, but the confounded things wouldn't grow. My son was about the only farmer around here who dug and got in his potatoes early. The consequence was that men came from all over creation to buy seed of him.

"If you've been around among the farms much you've noticed considerable many empty houses. You might think deserted farms could be picked up at a bargain. But really there's no cheap land to be had. It's all worked. The value of a place depends a good deal on how the owner takes care of it. There was an unthrifty sort of a fellow over the river who inherited a nice farm there, and his head swelled so big because of this sudden wealth that it wouldn't hold together. Dog-goned if he didn't go in debt to buy a farm across the road from his in order to get rid of having an Irishman for a close neighbor. Ordinarily nationality or religion don't cut no figure here, and it would have been better for this man if he'd been less prejudiced. He

had more land than he could work before, and by and by there was a sheriff's sale. The two farms only brought four thousand dollars; and by the big horn! it was an Irishman that bought 'em. You couldn't get 'em now for fifteen thousand. He's made good farms of 'em—no two ways about it.

"I can remember when eight dollars an acre was considered a fair price for cut-off pine-stump land suitable for wheat. Wheat land was the only land that was really valued, and the rest you could buy almighty cheap. The old original settlers, in the course of time, would sell out to some young man at a high price, and he'd go over the land year after year raising wheat, but putting on no fertilizer, until he'd wheated it out. Then—whift! he'd go West and start again with new soil where a farm could be had almost for the asking.

"But someone would always take the old place here. The kind of fellow who made a financial success on the farm was one who was willing to work, rain or shine, from daylight to dark. Monkey business won't do. But farming don't seem to attract our young people much, and their education mostly pulls them away from it. They want to get a living without working with their hands. As soon as their schooldays are over they skip to the city. You know what that means—no more wash-tub, or sweat, or muscular exertion as a means of earning money. They'll accept any sort of wages rather than go back to the farm. The girls are just as wild in this matter as the boys. They wouldn't

wash dishes if you was to give 'em ten dollars a week, and there ain't half of 'em could make a shirt and sew a button on it.

"If things keep on in this way I don't know where it'll pan out. The fact is, this is a peculiar nation of ours, and in some respects it has been a humbug from first to last. For instance, see how it used to be a free country with slavery in it. Our politics are a disgrace to the world. Every law for the protection of the people seems to have a hole in it as big as your head. They make the laws that way on purpose, and the trusts sit back and laugh at you. It's astonishing, too, the kind of men that capture the important offices. There was Tom Platt—in his own town he couldn't have been elected as a gooseherd. There wasn't a greater rascal out of jail, and yet, by thunder! he represented this great state in Washington as senator! If we don't make a change for the better we'll get to be as bad as Venezuela or Mexico or any of the other countries south of us. I've been voting with the Republicans ever since 1856; but they've had their own way a little too much. We've got to turn the rascals out to teach 'em a lesson, even if we let some other rascals in, and I'm going to vote the Democratic ticket this fall. Yes, I hope we'll throw the whole concern out body and bones.

"Now we've talked so long I won't have time to mow today. Well, never mind, talking is about all I'm good for at my age, and there's another day coming, or, if there ain't, the mowing won't matter anyway."



*Making ready to sow wheat*



NOTE.—At the eastern end of Lake Ontario the Thousand Islands begin with the outflow of the river St. Lawrence, and these are one of the most famous attractions of the Great Lakes region. They are best seen by taking a trip down the river, and are more naturally included in a tour of the St. Lawrence Valley than in that of the lakes. A steamer voyage on Ontario can very well begin among the westernmost of the Thousand Islands at Clayton and it can continue nearly the full two hundred mile length of the lake to Toronto. An acquaintance with this important Canadian city will be appreciated by most travellers. From there it is only a thirty mile journey across the lake to the mouth of the Niagara River.

In this chapter I have indicated some of the interesting features of the historic Genesee Valley. Rochester is the natural stopping place for touring in the valley, and the city itself with its great manufactories, its fine parks, and the river making a fall of nearly one hundred feet in its midst, is worthy of special attention. Main Street crosses the river by a concealed bridge, lined on both sides with houses, just as was old London Bridge. Near by, the Erie Canal is conducted over the river by an aqueduct. The lake is within easy reach. In the other direction is pastoral farming country; but keep on south for fifty miles and you are amid rude hills, and here are the three Portage Falls that vary in height from seventy to one hundred and fifty feet. These falls, with the wild gorge through which the stream flows and the piquant broken country roundabout, are well worth visiting.

## II

### A VOYAGE ON THE ERIE CANAL

**T**HE most widely-famed commercial outlet of the Great Lakes is the Erie Canal, which furnishes a waterway across New York State to the Hudson. It was completed in 1825. Not until five years later was the first railroad in the state begun, and the canal, in its early days, was a popular thoroughfare of travel as well as of trade. The passenger boats, or packet boats, as they were called, accommodated about thirty persons. They were fitted up with dining-rooms, and they had separate apartments for ladies and gentlemen, which were lined with berths. The fare was three cents a mile. Dinner cost thirty-seven and a half cents, breakfast twenty-five, lodging twelve and a half. Three stout horses towed the boat at a brisk trot, and were exchanged for fresh ones at the end of every ten miles. Two horses, or sometimes a single one, sufficed to tow the freight boats; and passengers with more time than money travelled on these slower craft at a cost of a cent and a half a mile.

The waterway was spanned by frequent bridges, some of which were so low as to make it hazardous to sit on the upper deck. But when the boat approached

a bridge of this sort, the helmsman called out in a loud voice, "Low bridge!" and the passengers promptly ducked their heads. The packet boats carried the mails and were met at every important point by stages connecting with the neighboring towns and villages.

For several decades the canal was the all-important transportation route between the Great Lakes and the Atlantic. Passengers found the packet boats far preferable to the jolting and often overcrowded stage-coaches, and even the railroads did not at first successfully compete with the canal's popularity. But since about 1860 its traffic has been gradually declining.

The packet boats have long since ceased their journeying, but the freight boats still ply back and forth; and I wondered what the characteristics of life on the canal were now. While I was in Rochester, I looked down on its slow traffic from a bridge in the heart of the city where a broad business street crossed the waterway. That full, gentle stream and the ponderous boats moving so smoothly and silently seemed quite idyllic, but I did not like to see the draught animals straining so hard and continuously. Their work was plainly unrelieved drudgery. Yet for the crews I thought the life must conduce to philosophic contemplation and serenity. There was the captain leaning lazily against the tiller, and only rarely needing to shift his position to keep the boat to a steady course in mid-channel. One of his men was leisurely pacing the tow-path driving the mules, and two or three other men were

on board with little to do, apparently, for they simply lounged about and watched with mild interest such sights of the city as their viewpoint afforded.

The charm of this sort of voyaging so appealed to me that I determined to try it for myself; but I was a little doubtful how much of it I would find enjoyable, and I decided to attempt no more than the journey from Lockport to the Niagara River. At Lockport is the most notable series of locks on the canal—a gigantic double stairway of five watery steps, twelve feet to a step. The scene at the lower end, with the towering buildings of the city rising on either side of a deep chasm is quite imposing. As I looked at the bordering structures through the silvery haze of a morning mist their seeming height was increased, and their picturesque skyline made me fancy I was gazing at some hoary castle of old Europe.

Traffic was not very lively at the locks. "I c'n remember when there was eleven thousand boats on the canal," said one of the lockmen; "but now there ain't five hundred. More boats used to pass through here in a day than go through now in a week."

While he was speaking three west-bound boats came along, and one at a time entered the successive stages of the locks. There was little noise or fluster—the men adjusted ropes and called back and forth, and the mules that did the towing were now urged forward and now halted, and a slight gushing of water could be heard when the locks swung open. As soon as one of the great





*Entering the locks at Lockport*

boats was in a lock it rose smoothly and steadily as if by magic.

I scraped acquaintance with the captain of the fleet, and he readily agreed that I should go along as a passenger. To get on was very easy, for the boats lacked only a few inches of being as wide as the locks, and I had simply to wait till a boat rose to the level of the stone abutments and then step directly on to the deck. The boats were empty and rode high on the water, and when the lock filled I looked down from quite an elevation.

After the boats had all reached the upper level, they were tackled snugly together and proceeded on their way. At first we passed through a gloomy tunnel under a portion of the city paving, and then on beneath an occasional bridge until we reached the open country. But our view was still circumscribed, for the waterway was in a rocky cut, the walls of which had no gaps to allow a glimpse beyond. A clear September sun was shining, and we found the weather uncomfortably warm.

"I can tell you it's good and hot here in summer," remarked the captain. "You see there's never no wind through this rock cut. I'll invite you down in my cabin when I get it cleaned up. It's cool there."

The cleaning was soon done, and I descended the steep narrow stairs. It was a pleasant change from the outer glare and heat, and except for a horsey odor the air was sweet and pure. I had not appreciated before

how smoothly we moved along. The motion was scarcely perceptible, and I only realized that we were going forward when I caught glimpses of tree-tops through the window screens. The apartment was small, and space was economized to the utmost. In one corner was a cookstove that could be shut away by sliding doors, in another corner was a folding bed, and in a third corner was a couch. Cupboards and drawers occupied every niche, and a table and several chairs besides the other furniture mentioned left very little free floor space.

Most captains are married and the wife goes along to cook, and they are likely to have their children traveling with them. But "Cap'n Jim," as his crew called him, was a bachelor, and he was doing his own cooking this trip. On the trip previous he had carried a hired cook—a rather erratic and headstrong young woman who had not been an unqualified success. "Her cooking was all right," the captain acknowledged. "The main trouble was that she talked too blame much. I had an argument with her one day and threatened to throw her overboard. So when we reached port she went off in a huff. The cooking in addition to my other work keeps me pretty busy. We're hearty eaters, and I have to get meat and potatoes three times a day. Bacon and ham and salt pork are our standbys in the meat line; but there are places along where we get steak, and we often buy sweet corn and other garden truck. The prices are way up for most of the food we use. I had to

buy some butter yesterday. It cost me thirty-six cents a pound; but down in New York City I got as good butter as anyone would want to put in his mouth for twenty-eight cents."

On the cabin walls were a gaudy advertising calendar, a colored home scene, and photographs of an old-fashioned looking man and woman—the captain's father and mother. "They made canal-boating their business," said he, "and I was born and brought up on the canal. I had to stay on shore and go to school when I was a small boy, but later, until I was about twenty, I was on the canal summers and went to school winters. I began driving by the time I was eleven. We had one canal boat, and four mules, which we used two at a time. During the day I'd generally follow the mules on foot, but at night I'd be riding on one of 'em half the time."

Cap'n Jim had started a fire in the stove and was peeling potatoes. Now he rose and looked out of the hatchway to see that everything was going all right. Martin was steering and Johnny was on the towpath. The two remaining members of the crew, Patrick, or "Paddy" as his mates usually called him, and "Whitey," were asleep in one of the other cabins. Whitey, whose nickname referred to his tow-colored hair, was employed for the season, and so was Paddy. The other two were "trippers," and they simply went back and forth between the western canal terminus at Buffalo and the eastern one at Troy. While the boats journeyed on the Hudson to and from New York these

extra men were not needed. Neither were they needed for loading or unloading. It was the same on all the canal-boats. A full crew was kept only when the mules were on the towpath.

"It's like this," observed the captain, after he had returned to his potato-paring; "canal-boating is expensive, and we have to save where we can. There's only a five months' season. That's the worst of this business; and your mules eat the year round, though in the winter they don't do nothing to earn you a cent. My expenses with these three boats average fifteen dollars a day while I'm on the canal. In port that figure is cut down some. The trippers wouldn't be worth their salt then, even if I kept 'em. They'd be around the saloons all the time. Most of 'em are hard drinkers, and they are not apt to be in condition to do good work when you take 'em on. I have to kind of doctor 'em up as we're getting out of port; and no sooner do we reach the end of our voyage than they bother the life out of me till they get their money so they can go on another booze.

"The fellow who's steering now used to have a grocery in Utica, but it went down his neck—he drank all his property. He's intelligent, educated, and capable, and he has good family connections, yet he's a hopeless bum. He didn't have a cent when I picked him up in Troy this time. He was down and out, you might say. All he had was the clothes that are on his back, and some of those are mine.

"But I can say this for the trippers—they're not





*Dinner preparations*

selfish or mean. They'll always hand out a quarter or a half dollar to a comrade who's broke, if they have it.

"I paid a young fellow off in Buffalo last summer—gave him forty dollars, and the next morning he hadn't a cent. He'd gone on a spree, and dropped down in the back room of a saloon to sleep, and some of the hangers-on of the place took what money he had left. They even stole his shoes, so he was barefoot. That sort of thing is liable to happen to most of 'em.

"If you was to discharge a tripper between ports he'd think it was terrible, but they quit you any time they please. They're makin' the best of wages all summer, and in the fall, which is the time when freighting on the canal is most rushing and profitable, we have to pay 'em three or four dollars a day and board. Good mechanics with tools don't get the wages these fellows do. Yet it all goes. In the winter they're off in the woods and all over at work, if they do work. A good many are supported in cold weather by the taxpayers. They go to jail purposely—get drunk, you know, and create just enough disturbance to be sent up till spring."

Dinner preparations steadily progressed while the captain talked, and presently he summoned the two sleepers. When they joined us we sat down at the table and had a good square meal, except there was no dessert. As to that Cap'n Jim remarked jokingly, "I don't feed the men pie because it makes the drivers' feet sore."

After we finished eating, the boats were brought to a stop beside the towpath, and the mules were changed.

In the bow of the foremost boat was a little stable cabin. It only projected slightly above the deck, and the mules quartered there were in what would be equivalent to a cellar hole on land. The entire six could be packed into this cabin, but during the canal voyage they took turns, three and three. On the deck was a light, strong bridge, one end of which was now slid down to the towpath, and the other end adjusted against the edge of the boat opposite a scuttle in the stable cabin. Down into the cabin itself extended a slatted gangway, and the mules climbed in and out much as if they were going up and over the ridge of a house. As each of the mules from the towpath came up the bridge the driver followed, hanging on to the creature's tail. This was supposed to steer it and keep it to the narrow path of safety. But a canal-boatman whom I later met in Buffalo and questioned about this custom said: "Oh, that's all nonsense! Of course you have to learn 'em to go in and out, but when you've got 'em learnt, the less guiding you do the better. They can take care of themselves much better than you can do it for them. I tell you there's many an accident on the canal that's blamed on the poor mules when the real fault lies with the driver or owner."

After the mules came on board the driver watered and fed them, and the captain rubbed a healing mixture on their sore shoulders. They always have sore shoulders owing to the chafing of their heavy collars, and the raw red patches seemed to argue that they led a hard life and did not last long. Cap'n Jim, however, affirmed

that the facts did not support such an inference. "To be sure this ain't no soft job," he commented, "and that's the reason comparatively few horses are used. They can't stand it like mules, and yet I've knowed of a horse that towed for twenty-one years. Really there's no stock so well taken care of as canal stock. I rub my mules' shoulders every time they come off the towpath, and each time, too, I scrape and dry their collars. They work six hours at a stretch, covering in that time about ten miles. We keep going day and night on the canal, but there's usually several days' rest when we get to port. At the New York end the rest is often a little too long. The mules stay right there in the cabin and eat. They can't move around to get any exercise, and that makes it come harder on them when they get back to the towpath.

"They are mostly pretty steady and give us little trouble. But once in a while a mule will object to climbing up the bridge. One of ours got balky and backed off the bridge into the water last spring. We got him out of the canal, but we couldn't induce him to go near the bridge again. The weather was cold and it was snowing and blowing, and in order not to have the mule sick we blanketed him and walked him up and down the towpath all night.

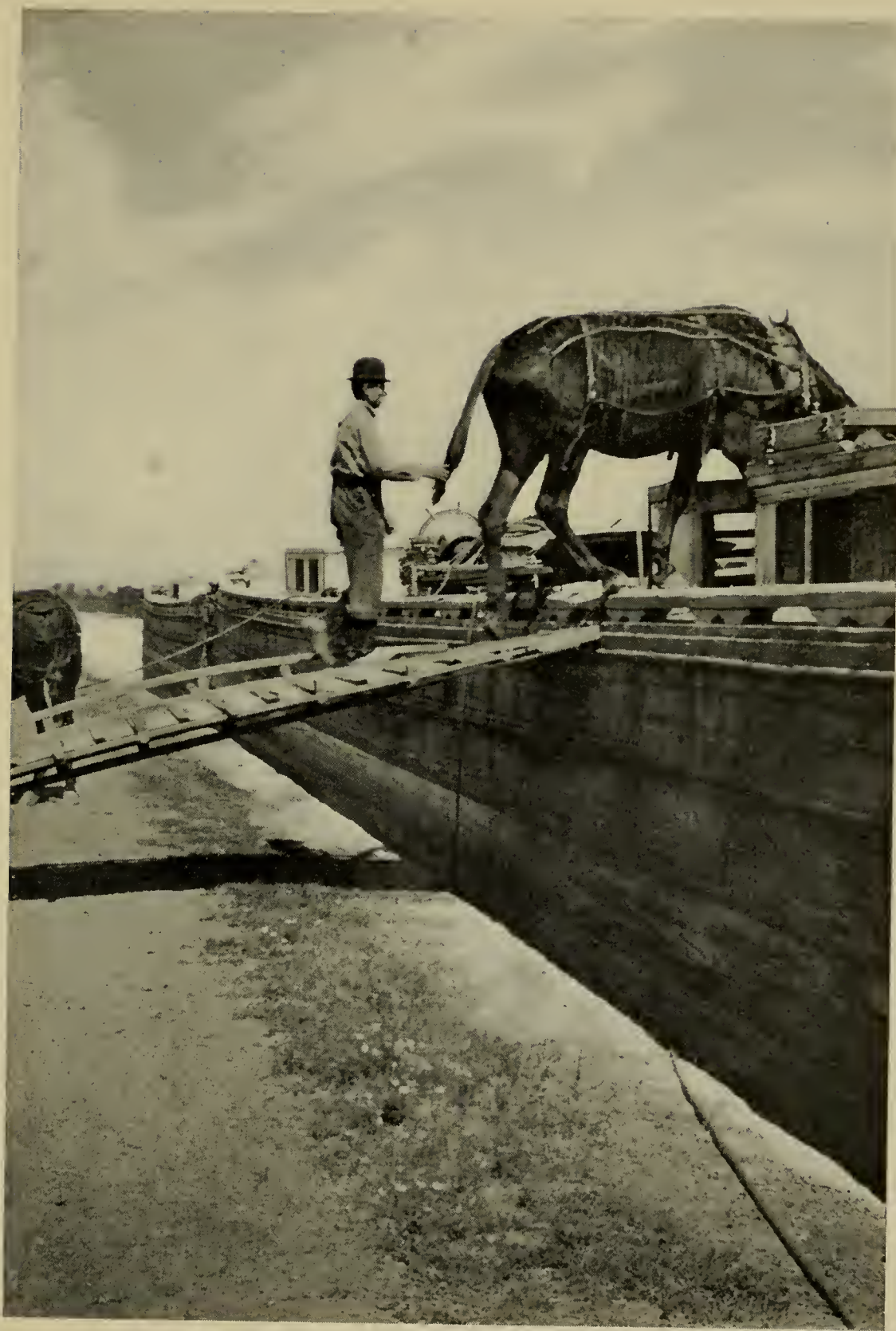
"Once in a while a team is drowned. As a general thing the mules drown each other. A single animal would swim, but when they are hooked together they get tangled up in the harness and the tow-rope, and it

ain't easy for us to help them, or for the mules to help themselves. Sometimes we rescue one, sometimes two, but usually we lose 'em all."

Martin and Johnny were now eating dinner, while Whitey was at the wheel, and Paddy was on the towpath following the mules. The animals were hitched abreast, and tugged steadily at the long rope. They did not require much urging or guiding. At times the driver laid hold of the rope and got a little relaxation by letting them pull him along. Once when I looked in his direction he was nowhere in sight. But Whitey pointed to a rude barn-like saloon by the towpath and said, "I guess he's gone in there to take a snifter."

Sure enough, he soon came out of the door, wiped his mouth on his sleeve, and at a hurried, hobbling gait went along after the mules, shouting, and shaking his whip, for they had just then left the towpath to seek the shade of a wayside tree.

We were in the open country now, and the channel was bordered by grassy banks brightened with asters and goldenrod. We could see farmhouses, and big barns, and ample straw stacks, and sometimes a village cluster with a church spire thrusting up above the environing foliage. Often a country road bordered the "heelpath" side of the canal, as that side is called opposite the towpath, and there were teams driving along, and we could see men working in the fields, and children playing about the houses. Rowboats were hitched by the shore, and the farm ducks paddled about



*Steering a mule to the cabin stable*



on the sluggish current. Occasionally we disturbed the meditations of a kingfisher, and it uttered its stuttering cry and sped away in jerking flight. Once or twice we saw a long-legged crane, or "shikepoke," flopping soberly on its way high up in the air. "Oh, there's all kinds of birds along the canal," said Whitey. "We see lots of 'em every day, and at night when we get in the woods we hear the screech owls. Last fall pheasants were plenty. I saw one fellow who had nearly two dozen. Pheasants are fine eating. They got chicken beat out of sight."

Just then we heard the report of a gun and observed a hunter on the heelpath shore. "He's after some of those yellow-legged snipe," affirmed Whitey. "It's kind of wild on that side along here, and the mud and flags and bushes suit the snipe exactly."

I had often seen the snipe during the day running along by the water's edge. They have a nervous excited way about them, and are always making little flights from one spot to another, never seeming to be satisfied with the place where they happen to be.

"Now we're coming to a low bridge," Whitey informed me. "You'll have to get off the roof of the cabin where you're sitting and stoop down. Do you see that long deep scratch in the roof planks? There's a bridge so darn low back here at Twelve Acre Level that we struck it. The water's high just now, but in that long dry spell in the summer it got down so the loaded boats could hardly navigate. Some of 'em had to wait

for a rise. The more water there is the easier the boats slip along. They're enlarging the canal now, and increasing the depth from nine to twelve feet. When you pass from the old depth to the new you can tell the difference right off in the way the boats tow—you bet you can!

"The state is spending one hundred and ten millions on the job, and in places the canal is all torn up. The work pays good wages to a very large number of men, but it makes a dickens of a lot of trouble for us. Probably the money'll be all spent before the job is anywhere near done, and then the voters will be asked for more. That's the way usually.

"Besides deepening the canal they're increasing the width at the bottom from fifty-two to seventy-five feet. That will fit it for boats four times as large as these. I expect power boats will be used altogether, and towing with mules will be a thing of the past. The present boat-owners will hardly be able to make such a large investment as the new boats will require, and the railroads or some big company will take up the business. Well, I sha'n't mourn any. Canal work, as things are, is a little too strenuous. We work six hours to a trick, and that means you've got to be out half the night. Sundays are just the same as any other day on most boats. But once in a while you find kind of a religious crank who ties up. There's only two such captains on the canal at present, and that sort never was numerous. This job would be all right, in spite of the Sunday

work, if a fellow could go to bed at seven o'clock in the evening and stay there till morning; but you are not even sure of having the time you're off your trick undisturbed. Things happen so your help is needed, and aside from the times that can't be foreseen, we're all called out, except one driver, every time there's a lock to work through. It's no joke, when the weather's nice and frosty, to have to leave your warm bed at three o'clock in the morning, for instance. There are seventy-two locks on the canal, from one to five in a place, and you can judge that we're routed out pretty often; but we never make up for work overtime on this blanked job. If I complain to the Cap'n about my hours being broken into, he says, 'You'll have all the rest you want down on the river.'

"Well, we do take it easy when we get to the Hudson and while we are in New York. All I have to do down in the city after I get up in the morning is to wash off the decks, and that only takes about fifteen minutes. Those decks have to be washed off every day, no matter where we are, and clean or no clean. That done, I sit down and read the paper, and I usually spend the rest of the day loafing around the boat. But when night comes I walk up street and take in the shows on the Bowery and everything. I never save any money in New York. Sometimes we're there for a week or more before what we carry is unloaded. Often, too, we have to wait a few days in Buffalo. This time, though, we've got a cargo of grain all engaged. We'll reach port about

midnight. Then it'll take us an hour or so to get everything in shape for loading. After that we can go to bed, but we must turn out as soon as breakfast is ready in the morning. The Cap'n has been joking us and saying if we want a shave we'd better wake up the barber after we get to Buffalo tonight. You see, it only takes a little while to load. If they use two spouts at the grain elevator they can fill a boat in half an hour. As soon as we are loaded, off we'll start. So our trippers will go back with us this time. Usually they receive their pay, and have a spree, and get away on some other boat before the one they came on is ready to leave.

"I don't know what would become of me if I wa'n't on the canal summers. I work every day in winter, and yet I can't save enough to buy a pair of shoes, because in the evenings I find it so easy to spend all I earn. Oh, this is better than any shore job. I get hardly a chance to spend a cent on the canal trips."

About this time we met one tow and passed another. The former consisted of two boats piled above and below decks with lumber, and the latter was a three-boat tow of gravel, sunk low in the water and toiling along much slower than we were. For a little while things were quite exciting. We were only slightly discommoded ourselves, but the tow-rope of the lumber boats got caught on the bottom of a gravel boat, and there was much shouting and swearing. The mules of the entangled boats were hastily untackled to keep them from being dragged into the canal, and the drivers ran



*Working the pump*



hither and thither taking care of their teams and making various attempts to prevent their ropes from sliding into the water beyond reach. Everybody was blaming everybody else with no end of rough language, while as a matter of fact no one was seriously at fault. Just how the tows untangled themselves I did not see, for we went steadily on our way and soon turned a bend that shut off our view of them.

“Those lumber boats was in the same tow with us going down the Hudson not long ago,” said Whitey. “We visited back and forth, and I used to talk politics with the lumber cap’n. He’s nervous and excitable, and a red-hot Republican. Oh, I had him jumping around like a game-cock.”

On the other side of the canal was an abandoned boat half full of water and deeply imbedded in the mud. I asked Whitey what had happened to it. “She got too old, and they put her in the burying ground,” was his reply.

We were now in a region where the wind had a clear sweep across the low flat land adjacent, and this made the navigating of our empty fleet difficult. However, we got along fairly well until we met a tow which bumped us against the bank. We were brought to a stop with the bow of one of our boats firmly lodged on some rocks. A stout plank with a rope attached to it was gotten out from below deck, Paddy on the towpath adjusted it, and heaved at it with his shoulder, while the rest of us pulled on the rope. I began to fear we

were stranded for good, but after the pry had been shifted several times our exertions were rewarded and we freed ourselves.

"We're in Tonawanda Crick," observed Cap'n Jim, "and it's so exposed here, and there's such sharp turns, that we sometimes have to tie up when the wind blows hard. Other times we are bothered here by fog. Nobody will run in a fog on this crick, except a few crazy guys who won't stop for anything."

A little farther on we halted to change mules. The normal time for this evening change was seven o'clock, and such was the time indicated by the cabin clock, but Cap'n Jim said he kept his timepiece set a half hour fast at this season of the year so the mules could be changed by daylight. Near by was a village, and there were children playing on the towpath. Some of them began to swing on a rope that extended from our boats to a tree. Whitey, after watching their antics for a few minutes, amused himself by suddenly loosening the rope and sending the astonished youngsters sprawling in the dirt.

We soon resumed our journey. A lighted electric car was speeding along on the other side of the canal. Whitey looked at it longingly. "We've still got a hard five-hour pull before us," said he. "I wish we were on that car. It would take us to Buffalo in jig time."

When we approached Tonawanda the sun had gone down, the radiant afterglow was fading from the sky, and the sober shades of night were thickening over the

wide landscape. As we were nearing the center of the busy town a young woman hailed us from a sidewalk beyond the towpath, and she kept pace with the boats while the captain called back and carried on a conversation with her.

“That’s our cook!” exclaimed Whitey, and he doubled up with merriment at thought of this unexpected meeting and recollection of her lively ways on the boats.

Cap’n Jim was negotiating to have her go the next trip with them; but whether he succeeded or not I do not know, for here my voyage ended. Martin, who was at the wheel, had brought the tow close to an abutted portion of the towpath that was of a height to allow me to safely jump down on it. I made the leap, and the boats swung off into mid-channel and went on their slow way into the evening gloom with never a pause.

NOTE.—Anyone particularly desirous of making a canal-boat trip would probably find little difficulty in doing so; but most would no doubt prefer to content themselves with casual glimpses of the waterway and its boats from the banks. The canal is exceptionally interesting where it passes through Rochester, but is still more interesting at Lockport. Anyone wishing to go on board to see something of the people and their home arrangements can do so most easily and comfortably by visiting the boats while they are in port at Buffalo, the western metropolis of the lakes. In the vicinity where the canal boats take on their loads, are numerous big elevators and these with the varied shipping make a scene of industry that is uncommonly fascinating. It was only after the construction of the canal that the city of Buffalo began to grow rapidly. The first dwelling for a white man was erected there in 1791. The name of the city is supposed to be derived from the herds of buffalo which frequented the creek that here enters the lake.

### III

#### TRAGIC NIAGARA

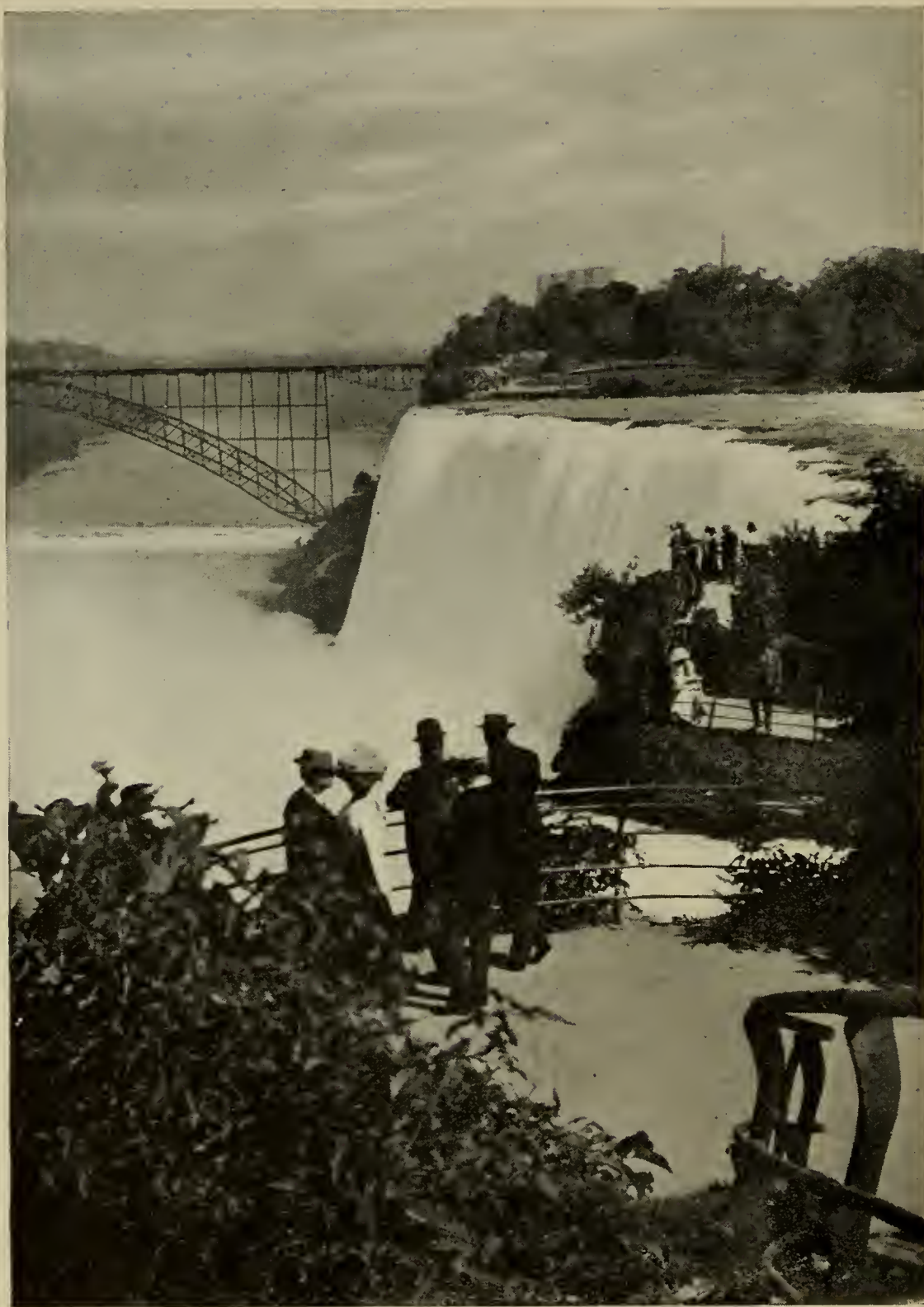
**H**E went over right there where you see that little depression, just about ten feet out from where we stand," said the man at my elbow.

I was leaning on the iron railing that guards the borders of the falls on the American side, one among a crowd that had gathered in the neighborhood and divided into little groups intent on talking over this latest Niagara tragedy.

"When did it happen?" I asked.

"Not quite an hour ago. I was here and I saw the whole thing. He was an old man with gray hair. I remember I noticed him a few minutes before, sitting on that first settee over there on the lawn. After a while he went down to those bushes at the end of this fence, where you see that sign, 'Do not venture in dangerous places.' He stopped there and took off his hat, and pulled out of his coat pocket a package done up in a napkin. A good many people were close around, but he didn't give us a chance to interfere. He just laid his hat on the ground with the package in it, pushed through the bushes and waded out into the water until the rapids carried him off his feet. The men on shore shouted, and





*The American Falls*

some of the women screamed, but we couldn't do anything, and in almost no time he was over the falls."

Nothing was being done to recover the man's body, nor was there aught to suggest any unusual happening, and the tale seemed more myth than fact. I looked at the niche in the falls where the man had disappeared, and at the swift, clear waters that from time immemorial had been coursing down the incline and over the brink of the precipice exactly as I saw them that day. Below was a frightful abyss of foam and seething mists, and in that wild tumult a human life had been extinguished only an hour before. Yet the giant cataract gave forth no sign. The eternal flow went on, and the air was full of its roar, and the earth trembled with its power. There was something satanic in its might and its indifference.

"Who was the man?" I asked the acquaintance with whom I had been talking.

"Some one from a town up in Canada, near Toronto. They found his name and address in the package he left."

"What else was in the package?"

"Not much. A little money, I believe, and a pair of spectacles in a tin case. That's all, so far as I've heard. It's the first suicide in the river this year. The Indians have a tradition that the falls demand two human victims every year. But it's been a long time since so few lives have been lost here. There's quite a number of river suicides every season. An odd thing about 'em

is that when we have one, we're sure to have another within a very short time afterward. The first one seems to be a kind of reminder to people who have a fancy for that sort of performance. We had seven Niagara suicides last year, and in the city here there were nine others; but we local residents never end our lives in the river. The falls don't appeal to our imagination as they do to strangers', and we know too well what rough treatment one's body is bound to get in these savage waters. The idea isn't pleasant. It's gruesome. It's horrid. We drown ourselves in the canal, hang ourselves, take poison, use a razor or revolver—anything but go into the river."

"Is this particular spot a favorite one for suicides?" I inquired.

"No, I don't know that it is. They are liable to go in almost anywhere. They don't all go over the falls. Some jump from the bridges, and some into the Whirlpool Rapids, a mile down the river. Of course, more or less of 'em are crazy, but most are just sick of life for some reason or other and come here with suicide all planned. Still, I think many cases are those of persons who simply get fascinated by the water and go in without any premeditation. I have a little of that feeling myself, standing here and seeing that water slide over the edge there and going down and down to such a great depth; and I know a man that's lately moved into the city who never lets his wife come here to have a look at the falls unless he's with her, and even

then he walks on the water side of her to keep her from throwing herself in if she should happen to catch the impulse.

“I suppose a good many drown themselves that we never know of. No one sees them do it, and they are never found afterward—at least, not so they can be identified. Take a person that goes over the falls, the chances are, if the body’s ever recovered at all, it’ll be picked up a week or two later down at the whirlpool, and it’ll be pretty well mangled by then. That whirlpool is a curious place. It’s two miles below here, where the river makes a sudden turn, and a great basin has been gouged out there a thousand feet in diameter with immense cliffs and banks dark with evergreens all around. It’s full of driftwood that can’t seem to get away and just keeps everlastingly twisting and stewing there; and if you look down into the water with a spy-glass, you see a whole menagerie of horses, dogs, etc., that have floated down from Buffalo and other places.

“Usually the suicides leave some articles behind by which they can be identified, just as this man did today, and it’s kind of customary to write a farewell letter, but then we don’t count it at all certain when we find one of those letters that anything serious has happened. You see we have a lot of fake suicides, especially over on Goat Island. They write a note and say they bid good-by to things earthly and are going over the falls; and they leave that note where it’ll be picked up, and think it’s a clever joke.

"I recall one man, though, who played that trick—not for a joke, but to get his life insurance. His name was Crandall. A while after his disappearance and the finding of the letter, a body was picked up down the river which his relations said was his, and they buried it in the family plot. They got his insurance all right; but some one saw Crandall himself the next year out in California, and finally they jailed him.

"Occasionally an intended suicide is prevented. Some years ago, for instance, a man well along in years arrived here in company with a young woman. They were in love with each other, but as luck would have it, he had a wife already. So, as they couldn't marry and live together, they decided to come to Niagara and die together. But when they got here the girl's courage failed her. He was ready enough and her timidity riled him. They say he chased her all around the park here to make her jump in with him, and he'd have succeeded if the people hadn't interfered.

"I tried my hand at preventing a suicide once. An intelligent middle-aged woman had come to stay a few days at a boarding house of which I'm the proprietor. She got here early in the morning and she stayed in her room all that day, only coming down to meals. I noticed from the first that she was dreadful melancholy, and her eyes were red with crying. 'Well,' I said to myself, 'it looks mighty like as if she'd traveled here to make way with herself,' and I decided I'd watch her. But nothing happened until evening, when I met her





*Entering the Niagara*

in the hall with her wraps on. She said she guessed she'd take a little walk. I tried to dissuade her, but I couldn't. So I thought I'd tell my daughter to go along after her and not let her do herself any harm. My daughter was in another part of the house, and while I stepped back to speak to her the woman slipped out the front door and got away so quickly she had disappeared from sight by the time we ran out and looked for her on the street. I had an idea she might have left a letter in her room and I went up to see, but I couldn't find anything the least suspicious, and then my daughter and I both hurried down to the falls. It was a bright night with a full moon shining, but we didn't get track of the woman and came home feeling a good deal worried. But our fears were wasted, for about ten o'clock in she walked.

"She'd been crying some more; still, she didn't seem as down-hearted as she had earlier, and instead of going to her room she sat down in the parlor and appeared to want to talk. Finally she told us her troubles. Seventeen years before she had married, and she and her husband had visited Niagara and they had seen the falls by moonlight. Her husband didn't live but a short time, and since his death she'd always been thinking she'd go to Niagara again, and at last she'd come back on the seventeenth anniversary of their wedding. There was to be a moon that evening, and so she kept to her room during the day and waited for it that she might repeat the old experience as nearly as possible; and she

said, while it was sad, she found it very comforting.”

My acquaintance turned away now from the railing beside the giant leap of the waters, and prepared to return to the town.

“Yes,” he remarked in parting, “there are a good many strange stories of one sort and another connected with Niagara. It draws all kinds of people to it—people that are happy and people that are unhappy; and it plays about as important a part in human life as any phenomenon of nature you can find the world over.”

I have dwelt on what this acquaintance said to me because the suicide of the old man so shortly preceding my arrival imparted to the falls a peculiar sentiment which did not wear off during my stay. What an unfeeling, all-powerful engine of destruction! Its might makes humanity seem infinitesimally small and weak. Yet, in spite of all its immensity and beauty and fearsomeness, Niagara is to most at first sight disappointing. We have from childhood heard so much of it that we expect—we know not what, but at any rate, something different. This is not the fault of the cataract. The trouble is with our own impossible preconceptions. “Would I had never heard of Niagara,” says Hawthorne, “until I beheld it. Blessed were the wanderers of old who heard its deep sounding through the woods as a summons to its unknown wonder, and approached its awful brink in all the freshness of native feeling.”

One cannot but envy Father Hennepin, who was the

first of the early explorers to see Niagara, and through whom its fame was soon widely disseminated in every civilized country. That was in 1678. Speaking of the river above the falls, the French priest says, "It is so rapid that it violently hurries down the wild beasts while endeavoring to pass it to feed on the other side, they not being able to withstand the force of its current;" and no wonder, for it makes a descent of fifty-five feet in a half mile. The cataract itself he describes as "a vast and prodigious cadence of water which falls down after a surprising and astonishing manner, insomuch that the universe does not afford its parallel;" and in another sentence he declares, "The waters which fall from this horrible precipice do foam and boyl after the most hideous manner imaginable, making an outrageous noise, more terrible than that of thunder."

So impressed was Father Hennepin that he estimated the "horrible precipice" to be 600 feet high. In reality it is 160 feet. Yet that is sufficient, so enormous is the volume of water, to represent a force equaling every twenty-four hours the world's daily output of coal. The energy of the combined water-wheels of the United States at the beginning of the twentieth century was not much above one million horse-power, while Niagara can furnish five or six times that amount. A trifling portion of this power has been utilized ever since 1725, but not until recent years has there been a serious attempt to actually "harness" Niagara. At present about one-tenth of the river water is diverted and passes

through the great turbine wheels, and the resultant energy is transmitted to towns and manufactories for scores of miles around. Electrical power from here has long been utilized by Buffalo, twenty-six miles away, for running that city's entire trolley system.

The falls are twenty-two miles from Lake Erie, and fourteen miles from Lake Ontario, measured by the course of the river. Not quite half the entire descent of the river is found in the perpendicular drop at the falls. Scientists affirm that the cataract began seven miles below its present location and that the water has been about thirty-five thousand years wearing back to where the falls are now. The river is divided at the cataract by Goat Island, on one side of which are the American Falls with a width of two hundred feet, and on the other side the Canadian or Horseshoe Falls, six hundred feet wide.

Over one million people visit Niagara annually. They wander everywhere, but they congregate most thickly on Goat Island. During much of the year you find the roads and pathways of the pleasantly wooded isle thronged every day with sightseers, on foot, and in carriages and automobiles. One of the little islets that the drivers point out as they cross the massive stone bridge to Goat Island is Avery's Rock, a short distance down the stream. On it an unfortunate man found foothold for eighteen hours before being swept over the falls by the impact of a boat let out with ropes in an attempt to save him.



*Where La Salle launched the "Griffon"*



In places on Goat Island you can go to the very brink of the falls and gaze down into the mists of the abyss with their shreds of rainbow as brilliant in hue as ever were painted on a retreating shower. The up-river view has its share of charm, too; but you need to get somewhat back from the cataract to fully appreciate the impressiveness of that always rushing flood of pure green water roaring down the terraced rocks, with swiftly smooth intervals between the ledges.

The most superlative thrill possible to the visitor is furnished by the Cave of the Winds. At the edge of the falls, separated from the American side of Goat Island by a narrow torrent is little Luna Island, so named from the rainbows that are seen there when the moon is full, and back of the avalanche of water between the two isles the rock is sufficiently worn away to afford a foot passage. Before leaving the Goat Island clifftop, intending pilgrims to the cave array themselves in yellow oilcloth and put clumsy cloth moccasins on their feet. They look like freaks after the transformation, especially the women. The precipice is descended by a steep circular stairway in a wooden tower, and then there are paths that conduct the adventurers to a series of slender wooden bridges which enable them to pass from rock to rock in front of the foaming fall to Luna Island. After that they go through the driving mist back of the fall and emerge on a path amid the stones that form a steep slope buttressing the perpendicular cliff. Finally, when they have climbed the winding

stairs, they photograph each other, resume civilized apparel, and very likely go off to carve their initials on the island trees.

While the scenery around Niagara is flat and commonplace, and the falls entirely lack the rugged and mountainous background that seems fitting, there is, to compensate, the gorge that the cataract has hewn through the solid rock, seven miles long and gradually deepening until toward its lower end its walls measure three hundred feet. The most striking portion of the gorge is its second mile, where the chasm contracts to a width of four hundred feet. The river here has a depth estimated at two hundred and fifty feet, and rushes through the narrow channel at the rate of forty miles an hour in a wild chaos of struggling, foaming waves and riotous spray. This lashing turmoil is known as the "Whirlpool Rapids," and so swift and confined is the immense volume of water that the surface assumes a convex form, and is distinctly higher in the middle than at the edges.

Ever since early in the last century Niagara has been recognized as an ideal place for gaining publicity by feats of daring, and the chasm at the Whirlpool Rapids has been the chief scene of them. A favorite method of those individuals who choose this spot to acquaint the world with their intrepidity, has been to perform on a tight rope stretched over the gorge. Not only have such ropes been crossed again and again, but the athletes have walked with baskets on their feet, gone

through various antics, and even cooked meals while poised on a single slender strand above that roaring, hungry torrent far down below. As if this was not sufficiently nerve-racking to the spectators, the famous Blondin carried a man across on his back.

What has proved to be a still more dangerous form of amusement has come into vogue latterly. The fashion was set by a little steamer, the "Maid of the Mist," which had been built to cruise about the comparatively quiet water immediately below the falls. This steamer had become badly involved by debts, and seizure by the United States officials was imminent. To escape confiscation it must reach some Canadian lake port, which could only be done by going through the Whirlpool Rapids. Three men were found willing to undertake this hazard, and on a June afternoon in 1861, to the surprise of everyone except the few who knew of the plan, the boat headed down the river under full steam. She encountered the savage buffeting of the waves bravely, and though she lost her smoke stack, passed through safely.

In emulation of this escapade all sorts of trips have been made through the rapids, some by swimmers, some in boats, some in barrels; and in spite of a number of fatalities, new adventurers have continued to make the attempt. While I was at Niagara the passage made by a Chicago bookkeeper known as "Bowser," was still being talked about. In the summer of 1900 he came to the falls with a curious boat built on a plan of

his own. He confided to certain persons in the city that he had for years been in the habit of spending his two weeks' vacation at Niagara. "Some folks have one hobby and some another," he said. "Mine is the Whirlpool Rapids. I've studied them for a long time and I think I understand them. There's no money up, and I'm not seeking notoriety. I'm going through simply for my personal satisfaction."

His boat was twenty-one feet long, had air compartments at the ends and sides, and with the exception of the cockpit, was decked over; but its special feature was an iron keel of over half a ton in weight suspended on a rod six feet beneath the bottom. This keel served its purpose, and when Bowser made his dash through the rapids, the craft never lost its balance. It would ride over one wave and dive through the next, so that the man and boat were alternately in sight and buried in the frothing leaps of the mad current. The race lasted only a few minutes, and then Bowser came out in the whirlpool and began to twist and circle on its dark labyrinthine waters. He had a pair of oars fastened to the boat when he started, but the breakers in the rapids had torn them off, and he drifted about the whirlpool for two hours helpless. Crowds looked on from the high banks of the canyon, but they could do nothing; and Bowser was in constant terror lest the immense logs and other driftwood restlessly turning in those turbulent deeps should batter and wreck his frail craft. However, he at length floated near enough to



*Looking down on the Canadian Falls from Goat Island*



shore so that his boat was caught and he was rescued. He had had a plan half formed to go through the rapids again and take a companion, but now he decisively said that one experience of that sort would last him a lifetime.

In 1902 a woman started down the rapids in a barrel, but she was caught in the whirlpool just as Bowser had been and circled there for six hours. She died shortly after being rescued. Yet a Mrs. Taylor accomplished the death-defying feat of going over the Horseshoe Falls in a barrel a year previous, and she lived to tell the tale. Of course, the barrels were specially constructed with plenty of padding and were heavily weighted to keep a certain side uppermost.

This pitting oneself against the forces of nature seems to have a peculiar fascination, and in 1910 a Captain Larson braved the rapids in a motor boat. It was the general opinion that he would perish. For the benefit of the pleasure venders on the shores, who wanted he should draw as great a crowd as possible, the trip was made on a Sunday. He started at about five in the afternoon in the comparatively quiet water above the cantilever bridge. Soon he was in the swifter current amid the wildly tossing waves. Most of the time he was lost to sight, yet at one point was shot twenty feet out of the water. In three minutes he had reached the whirlpool, where he kept to the outer edge and went on. Now, however, the engine stopped working, and he was at the mercy of the waters, which were

hardly less violent than those above. The little craft swung around stern first, and then turned completely over. Larson came up badly battered, and was swept on, the plaything of the mighty river. Once the boat stuck fast between two boulders, and Larson stayed there five minutes working desperately to free it. Again he went careening on his unguided course. The Lewiston bridge was in sight when he was caught in a shore eddy and grounded. Several men ran to his assistance. He wished to continue his voyage to the very end now that the worst was over, but they persuaded him to land.

The nearest approach to such a trip that is within the reach of the ordinary visitor to Niagara, is a voyage on the "Maid of the Mist," a successor of the maid that ran away. The waters on which you cruise are far gentler than those of the Whirlpool Rapids, yet they are still so rude you wonder that little duckling of a steamer should have the temerity to venture on their foam-streaked turmoil. Hour after hour, the season through, it makes its trips, dashing into the very heart of the falls. The passengers are clad from head to foot with heavy rubber garments furnished on board, else they would be drenched by the flying spray of the cataract. Again and again the tiny vessel charges into the seething froth churned up by the flood coming over those vast perpendicular precipices. It careens and tosses about in a manner very suggestive of danger, but this seems a part of the spectacle, and furnishes a

spice that is welcome rather than otherwise. As for the uplook from the deck at that lofty wall of water, green on the verge, then opaline and shading delicately into snowy white and vapory void, nothing excels it in the whole round of Niagara sightseeing. Visitors, after this trip, even if their first views have disappointed them, can hardly fail to bring away a satisfying idea of Niagara's immensity and grandeur, and the assurance that they have seen one of the marvels of the world.

NOTE.—Few regions in America contain more attractions within as narrow a compass, and all so easily accessible, as does the vicinity of Niagara. It is possible to see the chief points of interest in a day, but several days are preferable. The best months for visiting the Falls are May and June and September and October. The weather is then reasonably comfortable, and the crowds of midsummer are avoided. If possible make a visit also to see the Falls in all the glory of their winter dress. There are many points of vantage from which the Falls can be viewed, and each of these points has its own peculiar charm. See them from both shores, from the islands, and from the little steamer, and descend the Goat Island cliffs and look at them from the foot of the declivity with a wild foreground of rocks, bushes, and gnarled trees. For a thrill visit the Cave of the Winds. Walking is for most people the best method of satisfactorily seeing the sights in the immediate vicinity of the Falls. The miles of rapids and the gorge below can be viewed by taking the "belt line" of electric cars which make a circuit, going one way on the Canadian bluff, and the other in the chasm. Stops are made at all places of special interest.

Several battlegrounds in the region can easily be visited. One of these is in the chasm itself at what is known as the Devil's Hole, where an Indian massacre occurred in 1763. But the most important battlefield is that of Lunday's Lane not far back from the Falls on the Canadian side.

## 54      Highways and Byways of the Great Lakes

Down where the river joins the lake is old Fort Niagara, historically famous, and quaintly beautiful with its massive walls, its blockhouses, and fine outlook on the water.

About eight miles northeast of the Falls is the reservation of the Tuscarora Indians, and a leisurely sojourner in the region will do well to visit it.

One of the most notable historic spots on the river is a few miles above the Falls just outside the village of La Salle. Here, in the winter of 1678-9, near the mouth of Cayuga Creek, the explorer whose name the village bears built the *Griffon*, the first sailing vessel that ever navigated the lakes.

Still farther up the river is Tonawanda, the greatest lumber distributing town in the world. The lumber piles line the shore for miles, and the vessels that bring the lumber are constantly arriving from the upper lakes all through the navigation season. In 1890 there was unloaded at these wharves over seven hundred million feet, but the lake region is no longer the source of timber supply it was formerly, and the amount handled at Tonawanda had long been dwindling.

## IV

### THE PENNSYLVANIA SHORE

**P**ENNSYLVANIA'S coast line is limited to a strip on Lake Erie about fifty miles long; and the most populous town in the strip is the city with the same name as the lake. Erie is a thriving railroad and industrial center, but what drew me to it more particularly was its importance as a fishing port. Of all the group of Great Lakes, Erie ranks first as a fish producer, and vast quantities of the fish that are caught are brought in to the city of Erie to be dressed and packed and sent away to other markets. I fancied therefore that the wharves about the fish houses would present a scene of noisy, busy confusion. But I found neither crowd nor bustle, nor even an attractive picturesqueness. The fish houses were clean and sweet, though there was often much in their vicinity that was dubious to both sight and smell. Comparatively few men, laboring with orderly dispatch, seemed to meet all the requirements for handling the fish. Perhaps the feature of the wharves that most appealed to the eye was the nets drying on great reels. The boats were rather prosaic small tugs or gasoline launches. I stopped to watch one of the boats unload the fish that lay in compartments in the bottom. As the men tossed them up

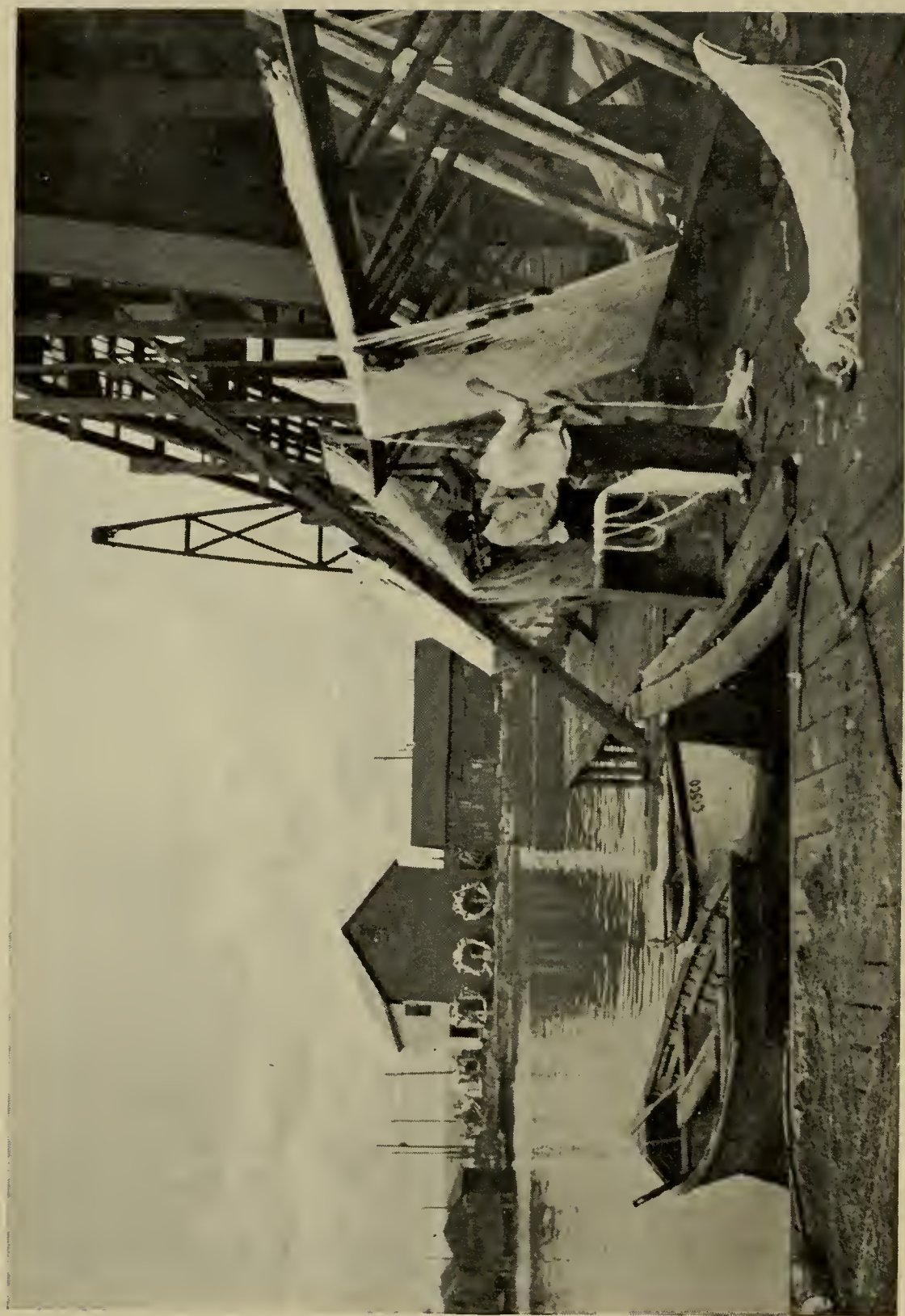
on the wharf they were sorted into boxes according to kind and trundled away into the fish houses; and how beautiful they were—those jewels of the water with their glistening scales!

A man in rubber boots had seated himself on a wheelbarrow near by, and was smoking his pipe and intermittently spitting. I spoke to him and learned that he was an old hand at the fish business. "Yes," he said, "it so happens that a man has got to work for the pleasure of having something to eat and keep himself from starving to death, and I took up fishing. This is a good place to get employment in that line. There's lots of different fish companies here, and I've counted thirty fish tugs all in a row at the same time along our wharves, and that wa'n't half of 'em.

"The boats leave here at five or six in the morning, and they're generally back by noon. You see that peninsula over across the harbor. Well, the fishing grounds begin a few miles beyond that, but twenty-five miles ain't too fur to go to set nets. Most of the boats are owned by the fish companies, and the help are paid good wages, but the men who make the most are on boats of their own. I've known a crew of four or five to ketch three ton in one day. They make a nice thing out of it, and during a season there's a profit for each man of from a thousand to fifteen hundred dollars. In the winter the fishermen work in shops or filling ice houses.

"Most of them are Americans, and fishing ain't no soft job either. There's a pile of work in this business,





*A fish wharf*

and considerable danger. Sometimes the weather is so rough the boats won't go out, and if the bad weather continues for several days, a good many of the fish that had got caught in the nets are no good, and maybe the nets are all torn to the dickens, too. There's been tugs sunk and the captain and all the crew lost.

"I came near getting drowned myself out here in the bay last summer. I and another feller was in a rowboat over near the peninsula fishing. By and by we noticed the clouds a-gathering, and it began to get dark all of a sudden. 'There's a big storm comin,'" I says. 'We'd better pull to shore.'

"Wall, sir, you have no idea how quick that water got rough. It wa'n't five minutes before the waves were rolling six feet high, and no sooner did we strike the land than the boat filled with water. But we got out safe, and hauled the boat up on the shore. Quite a few men lost their lives in that storm."

To the east of the city for scores of miles the most notable crop on the farmlands is grapes. I had seen the almost unending vineyards from the car window, and was eager to make a more intimate acquaintance with the grape region. A half hour's trolley ride took me into the fertile prosperous farming country, mostly level, but rising three or four miles back from the lake into a long gullied ridge. The ridge was by no means lofty, yet, to quote one of the natives, "The streams to the south of it flow to the Ohio, and those to the north

to the lake, and the waters divided by that ridge have to go around the world before they meet again."

I left the electric road and went for a long walk, much of the time with vineyards on either side of the highway. The grapevines were trained to grow on a double line of wires fastened to posts, and the rows of posts were far enough apart to admit air and sunshine freely and to allow ploughing and cultivating. When I had rambled so far on the dusty roads that I began to tire of walking I stopped to talk with a stoop-shouldered old man who was on a piazza reading a newspaper.

"I was one of the first grape-farmers in this vicinity," said he, "but in early life my home was in western Massachusetts. I taught school there for ten years, and then I had to quit on account of havin' the dispepsy. So I took me a wife and came out here to visit my brother who was farmin' it on the shore of Lake Erie. I couldn't work, and I didn't seem to be gettin' a bit better, though this is as healthy a country as there is anywhere. By and by my brother says, 'I know a doctor who can cure you.'

"We went to see the doctor, and he told me he'd fix up some medicine. 'I'd like it if you'd make out a prescription,' says I, 'so I can go to a druggist's and get more after what you put up is gone.'

" 'No need of that,' he says. 'I'll give you enough to cure you.'

"Then I got anxious about what he was goin' to charge. I knew that one of the other teachers at the

school where I taught had gone to a doctor—a city doctor it was—to get cured of the same complaint, and the doctor's medicine cost him twenty-five dollars. Even with all that expense, I'm not sure as he was cured. When I asked the doctor how much I owed, he said, 'A dollar and a half.'

"I was relieved, I can tell you; and the medicine made me a well man.

"I'd been teachin' at a boardin' school. It was no wonder we had the dispepsy there. We were settin' around at our work most of the time, and they didn't keep us very well. Hot griddle-cakes was served often, and quite a number of times we'd have for supper just soft raw bread that we couldn't eat and digest, and so we'd go to bed hungry. You see the man who ran the school had married an old school-teacher who couldn't cook. I guess her cookin' killed him. Anyway, he's dead and I'm still alive.

"I thought outdoor work was better than indoor work for me, and I bought a farm here and went to dairyin'. That was durin' the Civil War. When the war broke up, butter went down to fifteen or twenty cents a pound, and it seemed to me I could raise a basket of grapes easier than I could a pound of butter. I gave up dairyin' and started a vineyard. People around here at that time were raisin' wheat, barley, oats and that kind of crops. They sold to speculators who kept the price down, and I concluded they couldn't be makin' much. Brocton, fifty miles to the east, was

the only grape-raisin' town then, and it was claimed they had the whole thing down that way, and grapes couldn't be raised to advantage anywhere else along the Erie shore. But my grapes were as bright and nice as Brocton grapes, only perhaps a leetle mite later, and as soon as people saw what I'd done there was a great hooraw to set out vineyards.

"Most of the time we've found grapes a money-makin' crop. Occasionally, though, the price gets pretty low, or the frost ketches us. I remember one fall when we had an early cold snap a man went to my son-in-law, who was freight agent, and says: 'I've got seventeen acres of grapes, and last night they froze. They're just solid balls. What can I do with 'em?'

" 'Well,' says my son-in-law, 'I'll tell you what to do. Pick 'em at once. They'll soon drop off if you don't. Then ship 'em and take your chances.'

"The man filled a car, and told my son-in-law he'd rather accept a small price right where they were than risk gettin' still less by shippin'.

" 'Then sell them to me,' says my son-in-law. 'I'll give you five cents a basket.'

"The man was satisfied, and he let others know of his bargain, and they hurried to bring in their frozen grapes. By Saturday night my son-in-law had twelve car-loads, and everybody thought he was goin' to lose a fortune. Instead of that he made three thousand dollars, and he said he'd rather deal in frozen grapes than any other sort. They're kind o' soft and

flat tastin', but they do very well for wine purposes.

"Grapes are not as easily raised as perhaps you might imagine. They draw so much from the land that it's necessary to fertilize heavily; and you have to spray 'em again and again every season. There's a good many insect pests that need lookin' after—rose bugs, leaf hoppers and such things. We have to hire considerable help, and help is expensive and requires watchin'. If you've got anybody workin' for you it's your business to be around. You set a hired man to ploughin' among the grapevines without oversight, and you'll find him tearin' up the roots, jammin' into the vines, and raisin' the mischief generally.

"You see that air yellow house down the road. The man who lives there has a hundred acres in vineyards, and he cultivates a lot more land. This is a good soil and climate for all sorts of fruits and crops, and you'll often see orchards of peach, plum or cherry trees, and fields of buckwheat, corn, clover, and beans, and we grow a good many berries. Any fruit does well here if you take care of it. This ridge that runs along parallel with the lake seems to give us a long, mild autumn. The heat which the great body of lake water absorbs during the summer is given off gradually, and the ridge keeps the warm air right here. I've made up my mind there's only one better place than this, and that's the beyond, and I'm in no hurry about exchangin' this for that either."

The afternoon was well advanced when I returned to

the highway. I went on while the shadows lengthened, and the air grew gray with the approach of night. Then I stopped at a wayside home and engaged lodging. The house was an old one, but had been well cared-for. The barn, however, was a big, gray structure that was quite decrepit. It was a relic of the dairy period of the region. The farm family consisted of only a young man and his wife, both hard-working and intelligent. The former was busy about his evening work, and I kept him company while he milked his three cows where they stood in a row in the dusky stable. The milk was streaming steadily into the foaming pail when a cat came in unobserved and brushed against the cow behind him. Instantly the cow gave a savage kick. The cat got out of harm's way like a flash, but the cow's hoof caught in one of the milker's rear trousers' pockets and made a tear in the garment a foot long. He investigated the extent of the damage, made a few pithy remarks suited to the occasion, and went on with his milking. Presently he carried the milk to the house, and after he had run it through a separator in the back-room, his wife set away the cream, and he took the skim milk out to feed a calf and a family of pigs.

There were various other small jobs to be done, including the chopping up and bringing in some wood for the stove, and it was seven o'clock when we sat down to supper. We had the company of "Uncle Gilbert," an elderly relative and former resident of the vicinity,

who was visiting them for a few days. He addressed his nephew and niece as Harvey and Nellie.

"I hope we can have a gas well another year," said Nellie. "I don't like the bother of a wood or coal fire."

"And I'm sure I don't enjoy skirmishin' around after the fuel," remarked Harvey. "But to bore a well costs five hundred dollars, and sometimes you don't get the gas. However, there's nine or ten families right on this road within a mile who have gas wells that light and heat their houses the year round. Each family has its own well. You might think one good well would supply several homes that were near together, but the owner is too afraid it will play out quicker if he sells to the neighbors. We have to go down nearly a thousand feet to strike the layer that contains gas. The best supply is found close along the lake. Six miles south of here a gas well is a rarity."

"One advantage of gas," said Nellie, "is that you don't need to have any woodpile litter in the yard. All you see above ground is a cylinder tank about a foot through and perhaps ten feet long. I was used to gas at my old home, and I had great times when I began housekeeping here. I'd forget my fire, and the first thing I knew it would be out. So I'd be always bringing in kindling wood to start it. When you have gas jets in your stove the fire takes care of itself. Besides, as things are now we're obliged to use lamps and it's a nuisance to clean and fill them. Oh, there's lots of work and expense if you are without natural gas."

Uncle Gilbert finished supper before the rest of us, and he got up, took off his coat to be comfortable, lit a cigar, and sat down with his chair tilted back against the wall. He was a very deliberate man who weighed his words well before he spoke, and announced his opinions with an air of finality. "These are very good cigars of yours, Harvey," said he, "and I shall enjoy them as long as they last."

"So you've given all your cigars to Uncle Gilbert, have you?" asked Nellie.

"Yes," responded Harvey, "I sha'n't use any more."

"Why, what has happened?" I inquired.

"Well," said Harvey, "I've quit smokin'. I was converted one night lately at a tent-meetin' near here. It's been my habit to carry cigars with me, and I had one in my pocket then. As I was comin' out the tent I wanted it, but I said to myself: 'No, if I'm goin' to leave off some bad habits I may as well leave off all. If God has the power to forgive sins he has the power to keep me from sinning. He can take the tobacco habit from me if he wants to.' "

"That's right, Harvey," observed Uncle Gilbert, "and if there's anything else I can use that you conclude you don't believe in, just pass along to me whatever you happen to have on hand."

"I ain't any fault to find with the man who can smoke or take a chew of tobacco and be decent about it," Harvey continued; "and you can't find it in the lips of the Bible where it says it's wicked to smoke."



*In a vineyard*



"No," said Uncle Gilbert, "and I've never made a hog of myself usin' it. When I am around like I am now doin' nothin', I smoke more in a day than I do at home in a week. The trouble with you, Harvey, was that you went to extremes."

"That's just what I done," assented the young man earnestly. "The Bible says, 'Be diligent in all things,' and that's what I was with tobacco. A few years ago one cigar a day would do me. Then I got to smokin' two, then three. The habit kep' growin' on me, and lately I've bought a box at a time. I'd smoke five or six a day and chew up a couple of more. The first thing in the mornin', as soon as I got my pants on, I'd put a cigar in my mouth; but after I'd confessed I was a sinner at the tent-meetin' it was the easiest thing for me to give up tobacco of anything I ever done. I don't care for it any more. One advantage of the change is that my mouth don't have that dark brown taste it used to have, when I get up in the mornin'. Besides, I'm savin' the price of a good suit of clothes every year. But if I was to take a cigar again, I'd want the next one pretty quick, and I'd soon be worse than ever."

"You've hit it exactly, Harvey," said Uncle Gilbert. "Don't you be tempted to smoke again. I'll take care that the cigars you gave me ain't wasted."

I asked about the tent-meetings and learned that they had been held in a grove where formerly it had been the custom to have camp-meetings. "In the old days," said Uncle Gilbert, "a man would bring his

family to camp-meetin' and stay several days. Some drove from a long distance."

The recent tent-meetings had lasted six weeks. An evangelist had charge of them, and the collections taken at the meetings remunerated him. He was very fervent and roused his audiences to a considerable degree of excitement. "Whenever he made a good argument," said Harvey, "there were people who would holler 'Amen!' and if someone else was speakin' he'd help emphasize. 'Glory to God,' was his strong hold. His preachin' certainly was powerful, and yet five years ago he couldn't read."

"He didn't suit me very well when you took me over there the other night," remarked Uncle Gilbert. "Every time I got a chance to look around a bushel basket hat a lady in front of me wore I could see that the preacher had an awful grin. I hain't sayin' anything against his talk, but I wouldn't want a face like that. He had a way of drawin' his mouth so you'd see his teeth on both sides. Another thing—every once in a while he curled his head down, humped his back up and hopped about four feet into the air. I never saw such performing before in my life. The pulpit didn't seem the place for that sort of antics. It wasn't edifyin'."

"But his face or his manners ain't the main thing," retorted Harvey. "We needed to be stirred up and he done it. People weren't takin' any live interest in the church. They'd come out to the preachin' service and the

Sunday-school, but the prayer-meetin's had been runnin' down for years until they'd been given up. Now they've been revived, and at the United Brethren Church prayer-meetin' last week seventy were present. The evangelist made over a hundred converts, nearly all of 'em young people between the ages of fifteen and thirty. A good many of 'em had been brought up in Christian homes, but the teachings went in at one ear and out at the other. We knew we was sinners and expected we'd got to repent and believe some time, yet we was in no hurry. I haven't decided what church to join. The evangelist was preachin' Christ and not urg'in' any particular sect on us, and each person must select his church for himself."

"Harvey," said Uncle Gilbert, letting his chair come down to a level and leaning forward with his cigar in his hand, "when you find a church that you can feel is your home join that. Don't be dragged anywhere else. I don't care what denomination it is if only the gospel truth is preached there."

"My father got stirred up at a revival fifteen years ago," said Harvey, "but he has his own idee about religion, and he don't belong to nothin'. Then, here's my wife—her people are Baptists. Now you wouldn't think there'd be but one right way to be baptized, would you?"

"I don't know about that," responded Uncle Gilbert. "There's three kinds of baptism spoken of in the Bible."

"I haven't run across where it says anything about sprinklin' yet," remarked Harvey.

"If I had my glasses I'd find the place for you," said his uncle. "But never mind, let each person make their own choice. If Nellie wants immersion, I say 'Amen' to it; and if you want to be sprinkled, or if this gentlemen across the table wants to be poured, that's all right. I remember how Cornelius Allen used to always keep a-whalin' to me that immersion was the only proper form of baptism. Then one time he jumped onto Jim Coombs about the matter. 'Never mind, Corny,' says Jim, and he took a Bible and showed where it told about the three kinds of baptism. That made Corn shut up."

"The evangelist said he preferred immersion himself," Harvey resumed, "and he baptized sixty-five in one day over here on French Crick—put 'em right under. It might have been nearer to go to the lake, but a curious crowd would have gathered there and spoiled the religious solemnity of the occasion. He couldn't baptize such a number in a waterin' trough. So they drove five miles back in the woods till they found a place where the crick was deep enough. It was off the highroad in a man's pasture."

"They don't have any such powerful revivals as they used to have," affirmed Uncle Gilbert. "I've been in the United Brethren Church when over forty fell with the power. They'd drop right down unconscious."

"What made 'em do that?" asked Nellie.

"It was the power of the holy spirit," he replied.

"I'd sooner believe it was the spirit of the devil," Harvey declared.

"Land sakes! Harvey," exclaimed Uncle Gilbert, "you don't know what you're talkin' about. Hain't you read in your Bible how the holy spirit came to Christ's followers on the Day of Pentecost?"

"Not yet," said Harvey. "I've had an interest in the Bible for only six weeks, while you've been readin' it all your life."

"Well," said his uncle, "you ask this here one-eyed preacher over at the pond—what's his name? Higgins, yes, that's it. You ask him how it was in our churches here in the old days. He was a boy when I was. He'll tell you. When a man in a revival meetin' fell with the power, he didn't know anything at all, and except that he kep' on breathin' you might have thought he was dead. I've seen 'em jab a pin half its length into the arm of such a person, and he wouldn't flinch. I can remember how scairt Grandma Ticknor was when her husband fell unconscious. The preachin' and singin' and prayin' never stopped, but there she was flutterin' and fussin' around him in a way that reminded me of a hen with chickens. 'Pa, what's the matter?' she says. 'Pa, why don't you say something to me?'

"Then there was old Uncle Ichabod Fuller—he fell in the same way, and Aunt Chloe, his wife, sat down on the floor right there in meetin', took his head in her lap, and went to strokin' his face.

"After the service ended that night we loaded those who were unconscious into sleighs. There was twenty-one of 'em, and we took 'em to their homes, or, if they didn't live near, to some of the neighbors' not far from the church. Jim Coombs was taken to our house, and he never came to till next mornin' at breakfast time. He was lyin' on the sofa, when all of a sudden he began clappin' his hands and screamin' 'Glory to God!'"

"We'd think it mighty queer if people carried on that way now," was Harvey's comment.

"That might all be, Harvey," responded his uncle. "Nevertheless, perhaps we'd be the better for it."

"But why ain't people stricken with power now?" questioned Nellie. "Are they worse?"

"For one thing," said Uncle Gilbert, "the preachers are not so sincere. Their work has come to be more a way of makin' a livin'. And I'll tell you my candid belief—I don't know it, but it's my belief—that a great deal of the fault lies with the professin' Christians. You start right out, and go where you please, and set still and listen to what you hear in the meetin's—more than half the testimonies are just a sort of form and style. People ain't careful either about bringin' their children up religiously. I've lived a good many years, and I can tell you that in some ways we hain't been gettin' better."

"But did you approve of all that was done in the old revivals?" Nellie inquired.

"Why, no," said he, "I don't believe in goin' out

among the people at the meetin's, as they sometimes did, and gettin' hold and pullin' and haulin' and urgin' to come forward. Give 'em the chance, but it's their business to make the final decision. Your question brings to mind a protracted meetin' back up here in the country about four miles. They were havin' a great revival, and I went one day. I think it was a Sunday, but I wouldn't be sure. They asked those that felt convicted of sin to rise to their feet or put up a hand, and they'd pray for 'em. Among them who asked for prayers were two young men. One set up near the front, and the other back further near where I was. After they'd been prayed for the minister invited 'em to speak, and tell their experience. The feller near the front got up and said he wanted to repent, but he didn't feel that his sins were forgiven. So they prayed for him some more and sang a hymn, and after that the minister asked the other feller to speak. He kind o' hung back, but the people who was most active in the revival kept at him, tellin' him it would do him good to relieve his mind, and by and by he got on his feet. Well, I could see the Old Harry stickin' out of his eyes as if he had some deviltry planned. But he spoke along at first testifyin' in the usual way, and the minister said 'Amen' a time or two.

"Then the feller says, 'I'm just as sure of heaven as I am of ketchin' this fly on my sleeve.'

"He made a grab. 'By gum!' says he, 'I've missed him'; and out of the church he went.

"I wouldn't dare do such a thing as that," said Harvey. "I'd be afraid I'd be stricken right down."

"It brought things to a standstill in the meetin'," said Uncle Gilbert, "and it was quite a while before they could get goin' again. A few years later I got acquainted with the young man I was tellin' you about, and he was just that wicked he didn't believe in any hereafter whatever. He said he didn't expect to get any nearer heaven than his old horse would."

"When I was a boy the minister we had at our church preached Sundays and was an ordinary laborer the rest of the days. In the winter he'd go to the woods and be there from Monday mornin' to Saturday night choppin' down trees and drawin' logs the same as any other man. When the sleighin' broke up he'd go onto the crick and run logs. In the summer he worked for day wages among the farmers. He was a good preacher and a man that had success in his ministry. A great many were converted under his preachin'. To pay him the people gave him whatever they chose—money, pork and hams, butter, eggs, a load of hay for his horse, and any such things. About once a year a donation party was got up for him, usually in winter, and that was when most of the givin' was done."

We were still sitting at the supper table, except Uncle Gilbert, and Harvey had absent-mindedly eaten everything within reach. I now suggested that it was time to retire, and the gathering broke up.

In the morning the family were stirring at daybreak



*Picking tomatoes*



and we had an early breakfast. While we were eating, Nellie happened to mention that she had been a school teacher. This made Uncle Gilbert become reminiscent, and he said: "Your grandmother, Nellie, began teachin' at fourteen years of age; but she was fifteen the next month. Her wages were a dollar a week. She boarded 'round. I have known good men teachers to teach for twelve dollars a month and board 'round. But boardin' 'round went out of fashion long ago, and now we pay the teachers fifty dollars for a twenty day month. When I was young they taught every week day. After a while there was a half holiday each week, and of late years they've got it so they have the whole of every Saturday, and the teachers think it's awful because they have to teach six hours a day. Really, there ain't six hours, because the two recesses take out thirty minutes. Our old schools were well disciplined, and the teachers done well, even if they were paid less than you can get a hired girl for now."

After breakfast Harvey showed me around his farm, ending with the vineyard where we sampled the grapes. "We'll begin pickin' next week," said he. "I hire women here in the neighborhood to help. Women are much better than men for that job. A man's fingers are too big and clumsy, and he has to do a lot of fussin' and trimmin' to fill his baskets in good shape. But with the women the grapes seem to just naturally fall in the baskets to fill 'em and look nice. The women are the best strawberry pickers, too. My wife can pick two

hundred baskets in a day. We get good crops here and the farmers are so well satisfied, that there's rarely a chance to buy a place, unless the owner has made enough money to retire from farming and live in the village. Well, I'd like to do that myself, but I don't know what I'd retire on unless it was my looks.

"However, this is a pleasant neighborhood right here. We're too busy with our crops to be very sociable in summer; but in winter, when work ain't pressin', we try to get better acquainted with each other. We had a party every week or two all last winter. It began with surprise parties. They tried to surprise us, but we heard what was intended over the telephone and had a chance to clean the house and get ready. We took up the front room carpet and moved the furniture out so the young folks would have a place to play. It was a good room for dancing, but they were rather shy about that, for some of us think dancing is sinful. I used to dance until I began going with Nellie. Then I quit because her ma was opposed to it. I thought too much of the girl to take any risk of losing her. The people at the party who liked something lively played Skip to My Lou and Needle's Eye and just such silly games, and the rest set in their chairs and visited. About eleven o'clock supper was passed around. All we done was to make coffee and tea. Our callers brought cake and pie and whatever they wanted to. The people gradually left after supper, and by one o'clock they'd all gone home."

The young farmer now turned away to begin the

day's work in earnest, and I went rambling on through the countryside until I came to the lake. Then for some miles I followed the shingly shore with its strewings of driftwood and its rippling waves. Adjacent to the water was a strip of swampy woodland, and beyond this was a rough ascent to the plateau where was the cultivated farm country. While I was walking along the beach I overtook a man who was searching in the drift rubbish for possible treasures washed up by the waves. A companion in a rowboat took on whatever was worth carrying off. They picked up beer kegs, whiskey bottles and occasional pieces of board. They said they went out from Erie every day and explored different strips of shore. Monday was their best day, for on Sunday people enjoying outings threw away an unusual number of the kegs and bottles.

In nearly every glen by the shore was a shack or two and evidence of fires and campers. At length I followed one of the winding paths that led back through the woods. It took me up a steep ravine across a wild bit of pasturage, where I could hear the soberly melodious tinkle of a cowbell. On the open slopes grew rose vines loaded with scarlet hips, and, in a boggy spot were some delicate fringed gentians. Presently I got to a highway and kept on till I came to a field in which two young men were busy picking tomatoes. I accosted them and in the chat that followed mentioned where I had stopped the previous night, and spoke of the tent-meetings.

"It's awful easy to wind up some people," com-

mented one of the men. "There's persons here that never done a day's work the whole six weeks of the revival. I don't know whether they can winter on it or not. This here preacher took on awful about secret societies, and I heard tell that one man who'd joined the Odd Fellers only this spring throwed away his lodge pin and give up the whole thing. It's a gift o' gab that does the trick, and I'll bet you that just as good a talker could hold forth up there at the grove against everything this evangelist said and get 'em all.

"I remember when Harvey's dad got religion. Gee whiz! he blame near went crazy. Well, sir, he become one of these holy rollers—'Evening Lights' I think they call themselves. They claim it ain't right to hire a minister, and so each congregation selects one of their own number, and he preaches as the spirit moves, without pay. Then, too, if one of 'em is sick they don't have no doctor or give any medicine, but just set around in the sick room and sing and pray.

"I went to the baptizin' at the time of that revival fifteen years ago. It was over on French Crick. The preacher waded in, and he got along pretty well ducking the converts one after another until he come to a big fat woman. She got away from him, and he had to have help. That created quite an excitement, and the father of one of the young fellers who was waitin' to be baptized whispered to him, 'Herb, I'll give you ten dollars if you'll duck the preacher.'

" 'By gol! I'll do it,' says Herbert.

“He was a little feller, but withy as a whalebone, and as much at home in the water as a fish. Pretty soon the preacher baptized him. As soon as Herb was on his feet again he just give his face a wipe with his hands so he could see where he was at, dove under and grabbed that tall slim preacher by the legs and tumbled him backwards in all over. Then he swam across the crick and set on the bank. After the preacher had recovered his footing and had the water out of his eyes and mouth he did give Herb a terrible tongue-lashin’. You see the man was twelve miles from home, and he’d got to preach that afternoon. I guess he had an extra pair of pants, but he hadn’t calculated on getting his shirt or his other upper clothing wet.”

Just as my acquaintance finished this story his father, an elderly man who carried a cane, joined us, and sat down on a tomato box. He had come to complain that some of their hired men on another part of the farm were not doing their work properly.

“Of late years,” said the son to me, “most of our help are Polocks. Those that come from the old country are pretty steady and reliable; but you take these Polocks that are raised here, and they tear around nights and are wild as hawks. It’s the new generation that I’ve got. Usually they’re fair sort of workers, but they went to town last night and took a little too much opedildoc. So they’re grouchy and cranky today.”

“I’ve lived here all my life,” said the old man, “and I’ll say this—you can’t hire a man for two dollars and a

half a day who'll do as much work as a man used to do for fifty cents. They can play ball as much as ever, but they can't stand the work. Think of what a task the early settlers had to clear up their farms here. The land was covered with heavy timber—beech, maple, chestnut, hemlock. They'd slash down a piece, cut it up in log lengths such as a team could handle, pile it up and burn it. The quicker they got the ground cleared up the better. They wanted to get to raising something. The cleared land would first be pastured, for they couldn't plough, there were so many stumps in it, and they had to wait a few years for the stumps to rot.

"When I was a boy there was ten log houses to one frame house. The walls were of the hardwood trees that grew here, and the cracks were stopped with chinkin'—that is, with slender pieces split out of basswood. We mixed up some clay mud and plastered over the cracks and chinkin' on the outside. The inside of the walls we'd hew down smooth enough so we could paste paper onto 'em. The floor was of split basswood smoothed off with an adz. Our fireplace was of stone, and was so large we could roll logs eight feet long right into it. Those logs were big and green enough to last for days. We had no candles, no lamps, no nothin', except the light from the fire in the fireplace.

"The winters were cold and snowy, and we usually had considerable sleighing. We rarely get sleighing now. There's no timber to hold the snow, and it blows off in too many places and leaves the ground bare.

The rail fences used to ketch the drifts, and the roads would be so filled up we'd have a time of shoveling out, and of ploughing a track with our oxen. Pretty much all the farmers had oxen then. I didn't know enough to drive 'em myself. They wouldn't mind me someway.

"There's been great changes within my memory. I think at times of how we had to hitch up whenever we wanted to speak to anybody before we had telephones; and I wonder, with all the improvements they're makin' and easier ways they're inventin' for doin' work, what shape things will be in fifty years from now.

"But I can tell you one thing where old times had us beat way out of sight, and that's in celebratin' Fourth of July. Everyone around here went to Erie to spend the day, and the noise and speeches and fun we had there ain't been equalled since. Perhaps the person I recollect most clearly in the celebration was old drum-major Fitch. He was one of the head men on such occasions, walking around and drumming. Besides, he was a great feller to get up verses on anything, and he was a leader in our Erie Railroad war. We had quite a mess then. As often as the railroad built any track here a lot of fellers would get together and tip a whole string of the new track right over."

From other sources I heard more of this railroad war. It was one of the most curious episodes in the history of transportation. In 1853, when this war occurred, the railroads connecting what are today the great cities of the country ran one, or at most, two trains a day. On

the New York and Erie, one of the fastest and best equipped of American railroads, the mail train ran half the distance one day, and then stopped over night before it proceeded on its way. A fruitful cause of delays was the variety in guages of the different roads, so that the trains of one road could not run on another. Thus, at Erie, the road from the east was four feet and ten inches, while that from the west was six feet. If connections failed as they often did, passengers had at least to eat one or more meals in Erie, and often were delayed there over night.

Such a state of affairs, though quite satisfactory to the local hotel men, was very annoying to travellers. The city authorities refused to allow the guage of the roads within the municipal limits to be made uniform, and when the eastern road ignored this refusal and began to change its rails to conform to those of the western road the courthouse bell was rung to summon the citizens. The people were emphatically unwilling to be made a "way-station on a through route," and lose the advantages of being a terminus for railroads and steamboat lines. After listening to impassioned speech-making from the courthouse steps, the crowd, led by the mayor, started for the wooden railroad bridge. Employees of the railroad were there on guard, but they were quickly routed by a shower of rotten eggs and other missiles, and the mob wrecked the bridge and returned in triumph. Two days later a similar mob destroyed a railroad bridge at Harbor Creek, a few miles east of the





*Stacking corn*

city. This bridge was rebuilt by the company four times, and each time was promptly burned or torn down.

For three years the fight continued. "Break guage at Erie, or have no railroad," was the motto of the "Rippers," as the opponents of the road were called, because of their violent methods. There was a gap of seven miles between the two roads. Horace Greeley, the famous editor of the *New York Tribune*, passed through Erie at this time and had to "cross the isthmus" in an open sleigh through a severe storm of wind and sleet. After that the railroad managers and the townspeople were continually denounced in his paper. "Let Erie be avoided by all travellers," he wrote on his return, "until grass shall grow in her streets and till her piemen in despair shall move away to some other city."

At last the courts and legislature settled the matter. Both parties made concessions, and trains ran peaceably through Erie.

NOTE.—Erie has some important industries that are interesting, and there are shores in the vicinity that are pleasantly picturesque; but I think the grape industry which flourishes almost the entire distance between Erie and Buffalo is the finest attraction of the region. Naturally the country is most lusciously attractive in autumn, and October is the ideal month to see the harvest in progress.

## V

### AN AUTUMN PARADISE

**I** HAD stopped at Sandusky—not in search of a Paradise, but because it was in the vicinity where Commodore Perry won his famous victory. The city, however, is in a region that has a notable reputation for its peaches, and the harvest was then in progress. There is no crop more deliciously attractive, and when I expressed a wish to see the orchards I was advised to visit Catawba Island.

“And how shall I get to the island?” I inquired. “Is there a ferry?”

“There’s no need for that,” was the response. “It’s only separated from the mainland by marshes and a narrow streak of open channel. You go by railway to Gypsum, and you’ll find a causeway and bridge by which you can cross to the island easy.”

So to Gypsum I went and was soon tramping a dusty island road. I met an occasional load of peaches going to market, and by and by one of the returning wagons came jogging along, and the driver invited me to ride. After I had clambered up on the broad platform of the wagon beside him and we had started on I asked him how far he was going.

“I’m working for a man,” said he, “whose place is

over on the other side of the island, seven or eight miles from the railroad station. He's an old-timer at the peach business. In fact, he began thirty years ago, and was one of the first to put in peach trees here. Now there's hardly anything but peaches raised on the island. Our soil seems to be just suited to 'em, and we get a flavor in our fruit that they don't elsewhere. You can see a whole lot of difference between our peaches and those grown no farther away than across the harbor."

The peach orchards made a rather monotonous landscape; for the individual trees were in nowise striking, and in each orchard they were all about the same size, set in regular rows, with the ground beneath ploughed and harrowed. But the blushing fruit that hung in such abundance on the branches was sufficiently beautiful to make up for any other deficiencies. Nature's bounty was very evident, and I wondered that the buildings of the orchard owners should so often be unkempt in their surroundings and suffering for paint and repairs. But my driver enlightened me. Peach-raising here had not been without serious vicissitudes. "The San José scale got into the orchards," said he, "the trees began to die, and we started to fight it. We tried whale oil soap, and kerosene, and other sorts of oils. But a peach tree is too delicate for such things, and the oils were almost as fatal as the scale. Now we're using the sulphur-lime mixture, and that does the business. Spraying and all, raising peaches is expensive, but they're profitable just the same.

“Last April we thought we were going to lose this year’s crop. There came six inches of snow when the trees were in full bloom, but it seemed to help them. If the weather had turned around and froze—oh my! we wouldn’t be shipping peaches this fall. When we have a failure in ’em we get none at all. I remember a year when there was only four peaches on the island that anybody knew about. The fellow that owned the orchard they was in was saving ’em till they was nice and ripe, but one night someone swiped ’em.

“The peaches this season are not as large as they would have been if we’d had more moist weather. We was dry as a powder-house here all summer. Prices ain’t very satisfactory, either. Ordinarily we call it a cheap peach that sells for two dollars a bushel, and we get twice that for our best ones, but this year the price has dropped more’n half. That’s partly because there’s an awful crop. Then there was one while we were blocked for cars, and that knocked the stuffing out of prices. You see a peach won’t hold up like an apple. They have to be marketed at once, and the sooner they get to the consumer the better. But the principal trouble with prices has been that the buyers have taken advantage of us. It’s like this—our peaches are auctioned at Gypsum every afternoon. The loads are lined up there right smart thick—perhaps a hundred or more—and one after the other they are bid off. A slew of buyers are on hand from the cities, and they take all the fruit that’s offered and pay for it right on the spot.

But lately a buyer named Healey fixed up an understanding so the buyers wouldn't run up the price. The other day the farmers gave him a calling down there proper, and I don't expect he'll show up any more. There's another buyer they're talking about sending off—he gets full and makes a fool of himself a little too often.

“However, the farmers themselves ain't faultless. Some, in their hurry to get their peaches early into the market, pick 'em green. The fruit ain't fit to eat and they know it. But the skin will color up, and though it is apt to shrivel, most retail buyers are deceived and think they're investing in fine fruit. When they find how sour and flat it tastes they're disgusted with peaches, and that hurts future sales.”

We at length reached the farm where my companion worked, and at parting he said: “You want to look out for snakes while you're on the island. This rocky country just suits 'em, and they're pretty plentiful. I often see snake tracks crossing the highway—big ones, too. We have rattlesnakes and copperheads and blue racers—all of 'em vicious. But they won't bother you if you leave 'em alone. The other day I stepped on a rattlesnake. He was right in the path to the packing-house, and I tell you I jumped farther backward than I ever shall forward. Once in a while a dog gets bitten. Generally a bitten dog will go and lay right in the mud, and they claim that draws the poison out. But my dog

got bit in the cheek this summer and he died the same day.

“There used to be quite a few milk-snakes here. I know a fellow who noticed he wa’n’t getting the milk he ought to get from one of his cows. So he watched her, and while she was lying down out in the pasture he saw one of those short, thick, light-colored milk-snakes come and suck her. He killed it in a hurry, you bet you!”

At the rear of the farmhouse hung a bell on a pole that was perhaps a dozen feet high, and a woman now came from a back door, laid hold of a wire that dangled down the pole and set the bell in motion. This was the signal for dinner. The ding dong was not very musical, but it very likely sounded surpassingly sweet to the hungry workers.

I went on until I came to a little lakeside village. Down by the shore was a fish-house and two or three wharves, and in the lee of the fish-house wharf were some large flat-bottomed rowboats idly rocking on the waves. Several fishermen were loitering about, and I made their acquaintance. “We go to and from the fishing-grounds in those rowboats,” said a man who seemed to be a kind of overseer; “but we don’t use the oars much. A steam tug tows us. We’re employed by a big Chicago company and have stiddy work all through the year. They allow us two vacations of a week each, one that takes in the Fourth of July, and the other to include Christmas. That gives us a chance to





*Ohio peaches*

go off and celebrate, which means getting drunk for a good many of us. Most of the men are married and live on the island with their families.

“I’ve knocked around on all these lakes, and you won’t find much better waters for fishing than we’ve got right along here. The season generally opens toward the end of March, and we keep at it till late in the fall. We have over a hundred nets, and in winter we are busy mending ’em, and doing other repairing and odd jobs. Sandusky is such a center for shipping fish that we call it “Fish Town.” They’re handling ’em even in midwinter. Lots of pickerel that have been caught with a hook and line through the ice are brought in there. I saw one that long,” holding his hands thirty inches apart, “when I happened to be in town last January. I can vouch for the size because I swiped it out of a barrel and took it home and ate it.

“While the season lasts we plan to go out to the fishing grounds every morning. Sometimes, when there’s a north-east blow, it’s a little too leerie, and we miss a lift or two; but it’d surprise you to see the weather these little boats’ll take. Our last serious accident was two years ago. It was a nasty day, and a launch was towing one of the fish-boats. Coming around Mouse Island a wave ketched the boat and threw one of the men into the water, and he was drowned.

“Of late years carp have become an important fish in this region. Carp are a mud fish just like the bull-head, and as they’re always nosing around in the mud

they take up the taste. I'd wait a good while before I'd eat 'em. They're a blame nuisance, but they sell well. The Germans and the other old country men buy them because they're cheap. There's a man at Sandusky who has a pond where he fattens 'em. They come to the marshes bordering the harbor to spawn, and he furnishes boats and nets and pays so much a pound for ketching 'em and putting 'em in his pond. A carp has a grinder similar to that of a horse—regular teeth—it sure has; and he feeds 'em on cracked corn. When he goes out on the pond with the corn and raps on the side of the boat, the fish come like a flock of pigs, and jump out of the water and splash around and follow the boat. After about two months the pond is pumped down so he can drag it easily with a seine. This year he took out ninety-eight tons that he sold for four cents a pound. They were shipped in tank cars and so carried to New York alive. There are many other ponds along the Erie shore where carp are handled in the same way."

I presently left the fishermen and went tramping back across the island, regaling myself meanwhile on the peaches that plentifully bestrewed the ground under the roadside trees. By and by I met a boy on his way home from school. He too was eating peaches, and when I asked him how many he disposed of in a day he named a hundred as his capacity. Probably he overestimated. The teacher had kept him a half hour after the other children had gone, and he was doubtless feeling uncommonly ravenous just then.

Near by was a packing-house, and a man was standing in the doorway. "It pleases me," said he, "to see the way the help we hire eat peaches when they first come to begin picking. Peaches don't fill up any, and it's astonishing how many a fellow can stow away, and yet be as hungry at mealtime as if he hadn't eaten any."

The afternoon was warm, and I went into the cool of the packing-house to rest for a little while. The man who had spoken to me at the door, and two women constituted the packing force. They had finished putting up all the peaches that had been brought in from the orchard and were waiting for the next load. The women were looking at a many-paged illustrated catalog of a Chicago mail-order house. "Some families buy all their provisions from this firm," remarked one of the women, "and they buy their shoes and clothes and most everything else there, too. I want a sewing machine. They'll send it on thirty days' trial. Probably I could get my sewing all done in that time so I could ship the machine back."

"I wonder if I couldn't get some medicine from 'em to rub on and cure this peach fuzz itch," observed the other woman. "The fuzz poisons my hands and arms and makes my eyes inflame. The hotter and sweatier the weather the worse the fuzz bites. Some days it drives me pretty near wild. It flies in the air, and tickles in my throat and makes me sneeze. I'm troubled more than most by it, but all of us are troubled some."

"I guess you wish our farmers would raise some other

crops besides peaches," said the first woman. "But they seem bound to set the trees out all over their land, and don't leave hardly ground for pastures nor nothing. Most families used to have six or seven cows, where now they do well if they keep two or three. All we care about is to have enough milk and butter from 'em for our own use. A good deal of the feed has to be bought but when I was a girl our own hayfields supplied us and we had great big pastures. Gracious! sometimes I'd have to go hunting for Grandma's cows in her pasture, and it didn't seem as if I'd ever get down to the end of that pasture. When I found 'em I'd chase 'em up into the lane and shut the gate behind 'em. Grandma would come from the house with a pail in each hand and milk 'em there in the lane. All the older women milked. I tried it once after Grandma died. Father usually did the milking then, but one time he had sore hands, and I said I'd milk. I sat down beside Brindle and began—but, oh Lord! I was scairt to death. Every time the cow looked around I jumped up and run.

"Now most of the old pasture is growing to peaches. One part was almost solid rock with a little skimming of soil on top, and in order to start trees on it we shot out holes with dynamite to set 'em in. They didn't live long for lack of moisture, yet if the rock had been loose stone they'd have thriven. So it happens we still have a pasture. But, as I said, we buy most of our hay, and we buy all our fuel, too, except summer firewood. The peach trees furnish that, though it's poor stuff, for we





*Fishermen*

only cut down a tree or remove a large branch when it's dead, and the wood is punky."

Across the road from the packing-house was a pig yard, and the pigs were faring sumptuously at this season on the partially decayed peaches that would otherwise be useless. "Those peaches make good pork," said the man, "and it's surprising how fast the pigs can eat 'em, at the same time spitting out all the pits."

While he was speaking, another load arrived from the orchard, and labor was resumed at the sorting-machine. The man emptied the baskets in at the upper end, and one of the women worked the treadles and guided the peaches to the runway where they rolled gently down an incline, and, beginning with the smallest and ending with the largest, fell into chutes and found their way to a row of baskets. Peach-picking had begun late in August and would continue until the middle of October. A great many varieties were grown on the island, and each farmer had both early and late ones to make the season as long as possible and enable him to handle them to advantage.

When I was about to leave the packing-house the man called my attention to a particularly fine basket of peaches which he said he was going to send to relatives down in the central part of the state. "I shall cover it with slats and make it all secure," said he, "and yet it'll be sure to be broken into. Well, sir, by crackee! I expect pretty near half those peaches will be taken on

the way. That happens every year. It's a shame."

In the early gloom of the evening I was back at the railroad and took a train for Sandusky. But the train had not gone far when it came to a standstill. There had been a freight wreck on ahead, and we were delayed for hours, meanwhile getting hungrier all the time until one man declared he could "eat the jamb off the door."

Catawba Island is the paradise of peaches in this vicinity, but the rest of the farming country is a paradise also in its way. On another day I rambled into the region south of Sandusky, and it was a pleasure to look on the rich level lands and see everywhere such evidences of comfort and prosperity. I followed the long, straight roads, turning an occasional right-angled corner in a search for variety. On either side of the highway were deep drainage ditches, and after a while I came across a man cleaning out and enlarging one of them. I spoke to him, found him sociably inclined, and then I sat down in the shade of a near tree with my back against a fence post to have a chat. He was a gray-whiskered, round-shouldered man with a black slouch hat crowded down onto his ears. While we talked he worked quite steadily, only pausing to make a specially interesting or emphatic point. He was working for the owner of an adjacent farm. "The ditch is for the land's sake, not for the road's sake," said he. "It'll improve the man's hayfield, and he'll git some dirt to fill up a low place in his yard."

The excavation was so wide and deep it seemed to impress all beholders. Men came from neighboring fields to look into it, and many a passing team paused while the driver asked the why and wherefore of the work. Sometimes the driver would alight for a closer examination. One farmer who lived close by let his team go on into the yard while he remained and talked, and I observed that his wife came out of the house and unhitched the horse.

The man who was most critical had been drinking, and he had imbibed just freely enough to make him capable of pronouncing judgment with infallible wisdom on anything to which he gave his attention.

"Hiram," said he, addressing the worker, "what is this here darn thing you're a-diggin'?"

"It's a ditch," responded Hiram, stopping long enough to clean the point of his pickax with his thumb and finger, "I'm diggin' a ditch, Joe."

"Well, by gracious Peter!" exclaimed the other, "then why don't you slope the sides?"

"My orders were to dig it as I am a-diggin' it," replied Hiram.

"But," said Joe, "the sides ought to be slanted enough so the grass will grow on 'em, or else the banks'll be cavin' in next spring. Hiram, you don't know what you're doin'. The ditch and this dirt don't belong to no private individuals. You better quit right where you're at, or I'll tell the county commissioners, and they'll come here and take you to jail. I wouldn't

work for the man you're workin' for anyway. He wanted me to put up a stretch of fence for him last year, and we each measured the distance twice, in order to make a bargain for the job, but his measure and mine didn't agree, and I went off. Later his wife sent for me and asked what the matter was. I told her about our not measurin' alike, and I says, 'I don't know whether I'm losin' my mind, or whether you've married a fool.' But she and I talked it over, and she said she'd pay me my price. So I did the work."

"What time is it, Joe, by your gold watch and chain?" inquired the digger as he spat on his hands and took a fresh grip on his pick.

"By the chain it's dinner time," Joe answered, taking his watch from his pocket; "but by the watch it's only eleven o'clock, standard time."

"So you carry standard time the same as the town fellers," commented the digger. "But sun time—God's time—is good enough for me."

After Joe had gone, the ditch-digger remarked: "He's a crazy bat when he's drunk, but he's a good worker at such times as he is sober. The trouble is he can't let liquor alone, and drinks all his wages. 'Twas the same way with his father. Every time the old man got his pension money he went on a spree. Joe's wife and children has to work out to git enough to eat. When he married he built himself a house on his mother's land at a cost of fifty-six dollars. It was twenty feet long and ten wide and was all fixed so he could put it on wheels



*Advising the ditch digger*



and move it, if she wouldn't let him stay. He's still livin' in that house though he's added onto it some.

"Everybody seems to be astonished at the size of the ditch I'm diggin', but my gosh! if you want to see a ditch that is a ditch go out in Wood County. You could tip that there house opposite us into it bottom side up, and walk across on a level. It is right along side of the highway and goes through a hill to drain a big track of swamp. I was scairt the first time I went there. I'd never seen anything like it.

"A person lookin' around here in this flat country wouldn't have any idea that there was hills only a few miles south—all kinds of 'em. Among those hills they git a natural drainage, but here we have to ditch good and deep in order to keep the roads dry. Years ago, before the ditches were dug, the roads were all mud and water a good deal of the time. Yes, sir, we had awful roads when I was a kid. There was places where a wagon would go in clear up to the ex. This was a rough new country in them days.

"I was born and brought up in a log house. There wa'n't a frame house in the country then. Now I don't know of but two or three left. Most of the land was covered with timber, and it was big timber, too—not this little second growth such as we see at present. There was oak, hickory, and maple, and a good deal of ellum, and sometimes you'd come across a great chestnut tree six feet through. Most of the oak was sent right to England to use for ship timber. The hickory

was valuable for makin' wagons. A few years ago droves and droves of men were at work here gittin' out hickory butts. They only saved the trunk up to where the limbs began to make knots.

"When the trees were first cleared off I tell you the land was good. I've seen 'em raise a hundred bushel of shelled corn to the acre in spite of the stumps standing so thick you wouldn't think the ground could be ploughed at all.

"I c'n remember when the first railroad was put through here. The cars were little bits of things, not as big as our electric cars, and the engines were no larger than these here donkey engines. Instead of the heavy steel rails we see nowadays they used wooden ones with strap iron on 'em 'bout as wide as my hand.

"If you was to notice the names on the mail boxes along here you'd think you was in Germany. In every direction just as fur as I know the folks are German and not a Yankee family among 'em. My mother couldn't speak a word of English until after she was sixteen years old. But our young people go to English schools, and they want to be Americans. You can't coax 'em to talk German. They seem to be ashamed of it.

"The farmers in this region are generally pretty well fixed. They own their places, and you can't buy land along the pike here any less than two hundred dollars an acre. This used to be a great wine country, but when everybody goes into a thing the price drops. You won't

see a vineyard now on four farms. There ain't an acre of grapes where there used to be fifty. We did well at one time in peaches until the trees begun to git the yellows, and besides that the St. Joe scale come along. I grubbed my trees out and I hain't got a single peach tree left. It's the same with lots of other farmers. Lately we've put our land out to corn, oats, potatoes and such stuff. Where did you say your home was?"

"In Massachusetts," I replied.

"I s'pose they garden to beat the band there," he observed. "That's what Mrs. Burgh says. She has visited in Massachusetts a number of times. I've had a notion to go in for gardening myself, but the land where my place is ain't so good as it is here. I seem to have more than my share of setbacks. This year my early potatoes are a failure. I sha'n't dig as many as I planted. The blight got 'em. But my worst experience was three years ago, and that time my neighbors suffered as much as I did. It was the fifteenth of July, and I was cultivatin' corn. A cloud came up from the southwest, and it rained a little bit. Then a cloud came up from the opposite direction, and the two clouds met right at my place. Hail began to fall—Gee whillikers! the stones were as big as bantys' eggs. I stayed in a corner behind a hedge fence, and I had hard work to hold my horses. They kept running their heads into the hedge. It was a big osage hedge, and you know what a prickly concern that is. They got scratched some.

“My Lord! how the wind blew! But the storm didn’t last over half an hour. It done everything it could do and went away. Just before the storm I had a beautiful vineyard hanging full of grapes. It would have done you good to see ’em. After the storm not a bunch was left except a few that happened to be protected by the posts.

“I wa’n’t hurt a particle myself, and I drove the horses to the house to see how my woman had got along. She was scairt, and so was everybody else. The wind had blowed the top off my straw stacks, tore some boards off the barn and scattered ’em around, and I guess we hadn’t a chicken-coop that wa’n’t turned over. Lots of little chickens were killed, too.

“The storm had swept along toward Sandusky, gittin’ worse and worse. It tore everything all to pieces, blew trees over, and stripped off the leaves and many of the branches of the trees that continued standing. You ought to have been up to Sandusky the next day and seen the houses with their busted windows all boarded up. Lots of houses didn’t have one whole pane of glass left. There was hardly a telephone pole in two townships that hadn’t been snapped off. You couldn’t tell what had been planted in the cornfields, and in the oatfields it looked as if the land had been ploughed and dragged. The hail didn’t all melt for four days. By golly! where I scooped it off my porch it lay like a snowbank that first day, two feet deep. The season was too fur along to start the crops again, though some



*Looking out of Put-in-bay*



sowed millet and turnips. In the fall we were running all over the country to buy hay and corn fodder. There were men on mortgaged or rented farms who were so discouraged they throwed up their places, and the towns gave the more destitute farmers jobs on the road to pay their taxes.

“It reminded me of when the stars fell thirty-five or forty years ago. I was livin’ out in Lucas County and was at a revival one evening up at Swan Crick Church. Just as we were leavin’, at the close of the service, it looked like every star in heaven was comin’ down. But they didn’t fall all to once. There were showers of ’em, sometimes flyin’ in one direction and sometimes in another, with pauses between for nearly an hour. They made a noise, too—a kind of roarin’ noise that sounded like thunder, or like a freight train. We was all scairt, specially the young people, and some kneeled right down side of the road and commenced to pray. We thought the world was comin’ to an end, and it wa’n’t just the people that was scairt; the horses and cows in the fields ran away, and a good many got out. Everybody was huntin’ cattle the next mornin’.

“Now, if you’re goin’ down the road,” said the ditch-digger when I rose preparatory to leaving, “you notice the big house with piazzas all around it about half a mile from here. Jacob Goerz lives there. He’s rich, and yet he’s never done a day’s work in his life. He’s rich and I’m poor. It’s luck I tell you makes the difference—sure thing it is. You can go there and borrow whatever

amount of money you want any day, if you can give good security. He don't know what he is worth, I guess. He's a great friend of mine, and he told me how he got his start at a time when he was as poor as I am. Him and his wife drove around the country buyin' cattle, and they stopped at a farm where the man was discouraged and wanted to sell out. Mr. Goerz didn't want the place, but when the man said he'd sell for half what he'd paid for it the year before, Mr. Goerz agreed to buy. 'Now,' said he, 'you and your wife go in the house and carry out every dud you've got in there, and I'll take possession at once.'

"So the old owner moved out, and he moved in; but when he looked around his farm and see how stony the land was, he thought he was beat. Perhaps he would have been, only that in a short time some successful oil wells were put down there. They made him independent rich. After a while he bought this place here—six hundred acres. We all thought he was foolish to buy so much and pay the price he did. But he set right down and didn't do a darn thing except to sell the timber off, and that brought back all he'd paid. You call on him. He'll use you awful good. You can't name a thing there is in the saloons he ain't got in his cellar, and he'll give it to you, too."

The ditch-digger seemed to feel that this attraction would prove irresistible, but I did not call on the man with the well-stocked cellar. Later in the day I returned to Sandusky and went by boat to South Bass

Island. It was from Put-in-Bay of this island that Commodore Perry's fleet went forth to fight the Battle of Lake Erie in 1813. The island is now a summer resort. It has rocky limestone shores chiseled by the waves into grottoes and many fantastic pillars and corrugations, and back inland is a good-sized cave said to have been discovered by Perry. It was even affirmed to me that he and his men had lived in the cave.

At the time of the battle Perry was only twenty-eight years old, and his antagonist, Barclay, was not much over thirty. They had gotten their fleets ready with the greatest difficulty, and the British delayed meeting their opponents as long as they could. At length, however, Barclay saw no choice but to fight immediately, and he sailed to meet the American squadron, which was anchored in the little harbor of South Bass Island. His ships numbered six, and Perry had nine. The number of men on each side was about four hundred and fifty, yet Perry not only had the advantage in the number of ships, but these averaged larger than his opponent's and his guns could throw twice as heavy a broadside.

At daybreak of September 10, Perry's lookout discovered the approaching British fleet, and the American ships at once weighed anchor, ran up their sails and stood toward the enemy. The wind was so light that both sides found difficulty in getting into position, but by noon they were drawn up for battle. Barclay commanded the *Detroit*, and opposite him was Perry's flagship, the *Lawrence*. The firing opened at long range,

and that of the British was so destructive Perry decided to set more sail and passed the word by hail of trumpet for the whole line to close up and advance nearer the enemy. For two hours the battle raged, at the end of which time the *Lawrence* was seriously disabled. The hull was shattered, the rigging shot away, and the greater part of the crew was killed or wounded. Perry himself fired the last effective heavy gun assisted only by the purser and chaplain.

He now allowed the *Lawrence* to drop from her position, and took the desperate chance of venturing into a rowboat, in company with his brother and four seamen, and transferring his flag to the *Niagara*, which had been at some distance from the main engagement and was comparatively fresh. He reached the *Niagara* without mishap and again bore up to oppose the *Detroit*. His other vessels aided in the attack and they poured into the *Detroit* such volleys of shot that she soon became completely disabled and unmanageable. Within half an hour the British commander was forced to strike his flag and surrender. On both sides the battle had been hard fought, and the loss of life was very heavy. Four-fifths of the men on the *Lawrence* were killed or wounded and Perry himself was the only officer unharmed. When the ceremony of surrender was over, Perry tore off the back of an old letter, and using his hat for a writing-desk, wrote to General Harrison his famous dispatch, "We have met the enemy and they are ours; two ships, two brigs, one schooner, and one sloop."

NOTE.—If one is in Sandusky in autumn a most pleasureable excursion can be made to the peach orchards of Catawba Island. Peach raising is a somewhat prosaic industry the rest of the year. All the farming region around is prosperously attractive and in Sandusky itself there is the fish business and varied shipping to furnish interest. To the traveller, however, the scene of Perry's naval battle furnishes the chief attraction. Put-in-Bay on South Bass Island a few miles out in the lake should be visited to get as near as possible to where the encounter occurred. The island itself is a summer resort with a good deal of charm.

## VI

### FROM LAKE ERIE TO LAKE HURON

**I**T was midnight. I was on a big lake steamer that was ploughing its way northward from Sandusky to Detroit. There were drowsy passengers in the upper part of the vessel, while down below was a fragrant cargo of grapes and peaches to which the ship's employees helped themselves rather freely, for it was not much trouble to force a way through the frail coverings of the baskets. We had entered the Detroit River. The night was still, and the limpid waters of the broad channel were unruffled by the faintest breeze. Our vessel slipped along between shores brightened by frequent electric lights, and presently had made fast at our pier. Then I started out to get a lodging-place in the great, and to me strange, city. But at hotel after hotel I was met with the information that all the rooms were taken, and likewise every cot that could be crowded in. A state fair was in progress in the town, and the hotels could not accommodate the swarm of visitors; but they were doing their best. In the hallways men were sleeping on blankets, and in the hotel offices each chair was occupied by some person sitting out the long hours till morning. It was affirmed that

some unfortunate seekers-after-lodgings would be obliged to walk the streets the entire night.

I concluded I must take anything that offered, and at last I went into a shabby little fruit store that had a card in the window advertising rooms. This time I got a favorable reply, and the Italian in charge led the way to a large upstairs room where he lit a dim and smoky lamp. There were three beds in the apartment. These nearly filled the floor space, and each had an occupant. My landlord roused one of the sleepers, and told him he was to share the bed with me. At that the occupant sat up and began to swear. So the landlord appealed to the next man. This individual was either too amiable or too sleepy to object, and the landlord left me and returned to his shop.

The room was grimy and ill-odored, and both windows were tight shut. I opened the one next to my bed and slept in my clothes, or lay awake in them, and rejoiced that I had first chance at the air which drifted in. My room-mates stirred uneasily from time to time, and the inhospitable man in the middle bed who had spurned my company occasionally broke into a hearty round of profanity concerning the apartment and the bed, and went through some acrobatics as if he were fighting vermin. I, too, began to have itchy sensations, but whether they were merely an echo of the other man's uneasiness or had some real foundation I was uncertain. So I lay as still as I could hoping the creatures, if any there were, would not become aware

of my presence; and when the laggard dawn came I made haste to escape.

It seemed to me that my experiences in discovering Detroit were as strenuous in their way as those of the early explorers and settlers of the region.

Certain French priests visited the vicinity in 1670, and nine years later La Salle sailed up the river in the *Griffon*. He was much impressed by the attractiveness of the country on either side. There were fine open fields, walnut and chestnut groves, and at a little distance lofty forests. Flocks of turkeys and swans circled about, and from the deck of the vessel herds of deer could be seen roaming the meadows. All the voyagers united in praising this beautiful spot.

A settlement was begun by the French in 1701 on the site of the modern Detroit. The first thought was for defense, and a palisade was promptly erected to inclose the little village. At first the colony did not thrive, and there were times when it was so weak its abandonment was contemplated. The most strenuous and distressing experience came in 1763, shortly after French supremacy on the Great Lakes had given way to that of the English. In May of the year mentioned there was a sudden Indian uprising under the leadership of the famous Pontiac. So widespread was the conspiracy, and so secretly and energetically were Pontiac's plans carried out that within ten weeks after the first blow was struck not a single post except Detroit remained in British hands west of Niagara. The Detroit fort was garrisoned by





*On the deck of a sailing vessel*

eight officers and one hundred and twenty men under the command of Major Gladwin. About forty fur traders were at the settlement, besides the Canadian residents whose white cottages lined either bank of the river. Within the stockade were about five score small houses, a group of barracks, a council house, and a church. The stockade consisted of a triple row of pickets twenty-five feet high, and above each gateway was a block house. The gates were closed at sunset, but a narrow wicket in one of the gateways, was kept open until nine o'clock. There were three small cannon in the fort, which were, however, badly mounted, and better calculated to terrify the Indians by the noise they made than by any actual damage they might do.

Tradition affirms that on the day before the one set for the destruction of the garrison, Major Gladwin was informed of the plot by an Indian maiden in gratitude for kindness he had shown her. At any rate, though Pontiac in person directed the attack, it failed, and then began a weary siege. No white man could venture in daylight to step outside the little wicket or to show his head at a porthole without fear of Indian bullets. For weeks every officer and soldier was on guard night and day, and slept in his clothes with his gun beside him. They might have been starved out, had not a few friendly Canadians smuggled in supplies. Some boats dispatched from Niagara to their aid were captured. Three men belonging to the boats escaped to the fort,

but the other members of the expedition were massacred in the Indians' camp.

However, one of two small vessels that belonged to the fort slipped away down the river, went to Niagara, and succeeded in returning and landing fifty men at the fort, together with much-needed provisions and ammunition. One night the attention of the sentries was attracted by a mass of flames shooting up into the sky to the northward. The flames grew brighter and came nearer, and the sentries presently saw drifting down the river a huge fire-float, made of four bateaux filled with fagots, birch-bark, and tar. This had been prepared by the Indians with the intention that it should destroy the two schooners which were in the river opposite the fort. But the vessels were so anchored that it was easy for them to swing aside out of harm's way, and the blazing raft floated harmlessly by, lighting up the fort and the shores till it burned down to the water's edge.

After the siege had continued about three months, reinforcements to the number of two hundred and sixty men arrived. The newcomers were eager to go forth against the Indians, and when Major Gladwin opposed such an attempt they declared they would either make the attack or leave. So a reluctant consent was given, and the troops sallied out at two o'clock one night to surprise the Indian camp. But the savages, who had been forewarned by some of the Canadians, ambushed the troops as they were crossing a bridge that spanned a little stream a mile and a half above the fort,

and in the desperate fighting that ensued one hundred and fifty nine men were killed or wounded. The victory of Bloody Run, as the stream was ever afterward called, restored Pontiac's confidence and brought him many accessions. But help that he expected from the French did not come, his warriors presently began deserting, and he was forced to abandon the siege. It had lasted five months.

The most vigorous fighting that occurred in this region, in the years that have elapsed since, was on Canadian territory up the river Thames. On the banks of this stream, a few miles above Chatham, the Americans engaged the British and Indians, in October, 1813, and the great chief Tecumseh was killed. Tecumseh was a dreaded enemy, and in the hour of triumph the American soldiers disgraced themselves by the ferocity and barbarity with which they treated his lifeless body. Long afterward, it is said that some of them used to boast of having razor strops made of his skin.

The fine farming district along the Thames recognizes Detroit as its greatest market and trading center, in spite of the tariff barrier. "Yes," said a Chatham man with whom I talked, "and the railroads generally run excursion trains every Thursday in summer to encourage us to go to the city. Often, I don't suppose it's any real advantage to trade there, but people fancy they can do better because it's such a big place. I know though that it's worth while to rig up in Detroit if you want tools, because the American tools are high-

grade and the merchants there take off from the price the amount of the duty. They pay that themselves like. The Americans are great people for such schemes. Considerable smuggling is done, too. Lots of ladies go to Detroit lean and come out fat, they're wearing so much extra. Men would like to do the same thing, but they can't stow away so much in their clothing. People go down there wearing an old pair of shoes that will hardly hold together. They'll buy a new pair, put 'em on, and leave the old ones. One winter day I see the customs officers ketch an old Jew who was comin' along with three or four pairs of pants on. 'But it's cold,' he says. 'A man may wear as much clothes as he likes in de vinter time.' "

Later, when I was stopping at the French village of Belle River on the shores of Lake St. Clair, I made further inquiries about smuggling. The day was dark and misty, and I could hear the hoarse-voiced vessels greeting each other in the fog far away across the lake where was the channel of traffic. Quite a group of people had gathered on the piazza of the little hotel where I lodged. Some were connected with the hotel, others were loitering to and from the bar-room, and still others had taken refuge from the foggy precipitation. I chatted with an intelligent farmer. "There's all sorts of smuggling boats slipping back and forth," he said, "canoes, yawls, gasolene launches, and even steam yachts. They come over here and load up with poultry and other farm produce and then get away.



*On the hotel piazza*



It's profitable, if they ain't ketched. A Belle River man tried smuggling fish a while ago, but the customs officers got onto the racket, and he was fined three hundred dollars. Most smuggling boats go across in the night. Coal oil is one thing they smuggle from the other side. A rowboat will go into some little crick and meet a team that has brought three barrels of oil. They put two barrels in the boat and tow one behind. But if the officers ketch 'em the team, boat, and everything are taken, and they're fined besides. A man has got to be pretty good and sharp to be a successful smuggler.

"Sometimes men'll come over here in a launch, hire a team, and go for a ride. They'll stop at the farms and buy perhaps a hundred dozen of eggs and other things in similar big quantities, and say these are for their friends, but of course we know better. In the afternoon they are back to their launch and go away across the lake. They put the launch in the boathouse and nobody over there notices anything suspicious, because they don't unload until after dark. That is done every day. We have a custom-house man in our village, but he can't be everywhere at the same time, and he don't look for smugglers; for arresting 'em ain't a pleasant business. On the contrary it's sometimes dangerous. However, if he sees 'em at it he has to do his duty."

The hotel was near one end of the chief village street. Just to the south was a bridge that crossed the stream to which the village was indebted for its name, and on the opposite bank of the little river was pasturage.

I could see some cows loitering there, and occasionally one wandered over into the village, but was promptly driven back by an alert collie dog. The street was straight and wide and long, and it was lined with trees, though not many of these were well grown. There were a number of stores and shops among the dwellings, but the only conspicuous building was the church. That was large, with a lofty spire surmounted by a gilt cross. It illustrated quite forcibly how much the monotony of a landscape is relieved by the presence of a steeple. The church spires furnish a very valuable accent.

The people were apt to be swarthy in complexion, which a fellow-sojourner at the hotel explained by saying, "Their ancestors come here early, and there's a good sprinkling of Indian into 'em." He added that they were unprogressive and narrow in their interests, and that they read little and got their information from hearsay; also that the women were inclined to use swear words when they wished to be emphatic, and were chiefly interested "in the style they can carry in powdering up and dressing."

Most of the dwellings were small and looked rather exposed and dreary. Clear, level farm fields lay behind the village, but when one got a mile or two back there began to be orchards and patches of woodland. The hamlet was well supplied with hotels. There were four, but these were lodging-places only incidentally. Their chief purpose was to sell spirituous liquors.

It was surprising to see how numerous were the

visitors to the bar at the hotel where I lodged, and they seemed to represent all grades of society. One evening I sat in the hotel office chatting with some of the frequenters of the place—roughly dressed young farmers or tradesmen's employees for the most part. Beyond a partition was the bar, where we could hear the clink of glasses, and noisy conversation. The only one of my companions not a villager was a man who went through the region selling a liniment that was more especially for horses and cattle, but was good besides for all sorts of human sprains, cuts, and bruises. He left at least one bottle at each farmhouse, and collected a year later for whatever was used. This plan had made permanent customers of the entire countryside.

I sat near the door so I could set it ajar a little when the atmosphere became unbearably rank with tobacco smoke. At intervals I could hear the rain falling. "You'll see the people laughin' now after this rain," remarked one of my companions who was a brick mason. "They want to get some living for next year. So now they will put in their wheat. It has been too dry before."

"I expect I shall have hard driving for a day or two," commented the medicine peddler, "but my golly! spring is the time for mud here. In places the roads are so clayey you can't go on 'em when the frost is coming out. The clay rolls right up on your wheels and brings you to a standstill."

"Our land is naturally swampy," said one of the other

men, "but in the last few years we've drained it so we get pretty good crops. If you want to see fine farms though, you go farther back from the lake to where the Scotch have settled."

"The Scotch are good farmers," observed the medicine man, "and they make money, but they're too close fisted. They'll go fifty miles for the sake of getting a thing a cent cheaper, without taking no account of the time they lose."

"We used to have to make a living by going to the woods," said the previous speaker. "We didn't need to go far. It was all woods here twenty-five years ago. The pines were cut first, and those old white pines were immense. Their tops towered up above all the other trees. Oak and walnut were cut next. Now they even get out ellum. They use it for making furniture."

"I saw a man come into the village this afternoon with a double-barreled gun under his arm," said I, "and he was carrying a bird he had shot. It was a duck, I think."

"No, it couldn't have been a duck," observed the mason. "If it had been he wouldn't have let it be seen. This is out-of-season for ducks. He'd have sneaked it in on the quiet, and if in spite of that you happened to see it he'd say he found it dead. What you saw must have been a hell-diver. It's body looks like a duck's, but its legs are long, and they're so far back it can't walk on dry land. It falls right over. You can't often get one. Every time you shoot it dives, and the chances

are it is so quick your ammunition is wasted. They're not much good anyway. The flesh has a fishy taste, but some eat 'em. We've got hunters here who'll eat shikepokes—those broad-winged, long-legged beggars."

The medicine man inquired if there was any fishing in the little river. "Yes," replied the mason, "fellows come from Detroit in launches and go up the stream back of the hotel, and every time they ketch a fish they bring it in here to show it and get a drink, even if it ain't more'n two inches long. If they ketch thirty or forty that means some business.

"The river is more valuable to us for trapping than for fishing. But the best place for trapping is a big marsh in the south part of the county. The farmers go there in early November and camp around the edge till things freeze up solid, and they go again in March and April. They rent the privilege. Some days they make twenty-five dollars. Usually about four men go in company. They build a shack and set their traps. There's thousands of acres in the marsh. The men go about in a boat which they punt through the cat-tails and grass. Where they set a trap they mark the spot with a rag tied to a reed. Last year mushrat hides sold for from seventy-five cents to a dollar, but a few years ago we only got ten cents or a shilling. They tan 'em to make all sorts of deerskins out of 'em. Today you never know what you're buying. A woman judges by the price whether she's getting a fine thing or not. Show her one hat for six dollars, and one for fifteen,

and the fifteen dollar one will be her choice every time, though it may be just the same as the other. It's the price what does the selling.

"We're getting eight and ten dollars for mink hides. They're small for so much money. A mink is slim and long and not much bigger than a mushrat. They're sly creatures. It ain't easy to ketch one. A trapper who gets half a dozen in a season thinks he's doin' well. Once in a while one gets caught in a mushrat trap. That's when he's in a hurry chasing a mushrat. They like mushrats to eat, and they like chickens, too."

"That reminds me of when I was a boy," said the medicine peddler. "I heard a deuce of a racket among the chickens one night, and in the morning we found a weasel had got twenty-two of 'em. By hunting around I found his hole, and I waited there with a club until he poked his head out. Then I struck, and I didn't think I could possibly miss him, but my club only hit the spot where he'd been. Talk about bein' fooled—I didn't feel bigger'n a pin."

"A man has to be pretty handy even with a gun to kill a weasel," affirmed the mason, "but no matter what you do the weasel will keep comin' up to peek out of his hole and see if you're lookin' at him until you go away or he's killed."

"Mushrats are sly in their way, too. If the rat can get out of water with the trap he'll gnaw his leg off. Many a time I've found a leg in a trap in the morning, and I've caught mushrats that have lost a leg—yes, and



*The village sidewalk*



those that have lost two legs. They're a night animal, but in the spring the high water drives 'em out of their holes, and you see 'em swimming around in the daytime.

"This was a lot livelier place when the hunting was good, and when there was lumbering in the woods around here. The young fellows don't have much liking for farm life as things are now, and nearly all of 'em go to the city because they think there's lots of fun there. Besides, there ain't money enough in farming to suit 'em. They feel sure they can make a bigger wad elsewhere. I was one of those guys myself. If I'd stayed on the old farm I'd have been worth five thousand dollars at least. Now I'm workin' for wages. I've got my day ahead of me, and that's all. But I like to work ten hours a day and then be free. No wonder farm help is scarce, when the hired man is expected to do chores after supper every day, and has also to put in some time Sundays. Then, too, the farmers don't like to see a hired man eat very much, and if he drinks two glasses of milk at a meal they charge him for one.

"The girls have the same ideas about the country as the boys. They want to work in the stores and factories. The only way to prevent 'em from leavin' home is to keep 'em barefoot. Once they get a good pair of shoes they'll walk away rather than stay here. Often they go to the bad in the city, and so do the boys. Very likely a fellow gets wages that look large to him, but unless he's a good old saver, there's nothing left after he's paid his board and other expenses—some necessary

and a good many not. A fellow who never used tobacco before he went away will come back in six months smokin' cigarets. The majority become bums. They strike a rough gang, and if there's bad holes anywhere in the city they get into 'em.

"The fellows who stay in the country have their dissipations and extravagances, too. Lots of 'em get a rubber-tired rig, and run around in it, but that's comparatively harmless. Some parents expect to safeguard their children by givin' 'em an education. Of course, the children must have some schooling; but send 'em to the high school, and they're no good anyway. A few keep their heads level, but most get in a pretty fast gang.

"Belle River has been dull enough for a long time, but lately it's had another setback. We always have played ball on Sunday until this year the priest put a stop to it because the players didn't come to mass. It's only a poor game we can play without the Sunday practice. Several of the players in the big leagues down in the States have come from here. Yes, this town has been famous for producing the best ball-players and fighters."

His final statement was almost drowned by a clamorous uproar in the bar-room. For some time we had heard an increasingly loud-voiced dispute going on there. But now it culminated in a struggle between the bar-tender and a customer. They grappled, and with ominous vigor and fierceness slammed and thrashed

about until the bar-tender got his man to the door and threw him out into the night.

Then the victor, perspiring and ruffled, came into the office and explained that he had trusted the man for drink some time before, and they had disagreed about the amount that was due. He soon returned to the bar, and one of our company remarked: "They didn't treat the fellow right. Either they ought to have kept his head clear by not letting him have so much, or they ought to have given him enough so he'd been helpless."

I returned to the banks of the Detroit River the next day. The waterway is twenty-seven miles long and has an average width of a mile. Through this channel passes the overflow of the three great lakes above in a deep steady stream, unbroken by rapids or eddies. From year's end to year's end its height is practically stationary, but a northern gale will drive the Lake Huron water into it and cause it to rise a few inches, and a gale from the opposite direction causes a corresponding fall.

No other of the world's waterways is the scene of such an amount of commerce. Most of the freight passes down on its way to the cities of the east. Only about a third as much goes in the other direction. Coal is the principal item in the up-bound traffic, while the southward loads consist largely of iron ore, grain, flour, and lumber. The fleet of vessels on the lakes is enormous. They themselves burn yearly no less than three million tons of coal—enough to heat every home in two

such cities as Chicago for a twelve-month. The monster freighters are quite impressive, moving so steadily and swiftly up or down the river with a greenish wave curling smoothly away from either side of the bow. Besides the iron hulled, steam propelled vessels, there is still an occasional wooden sailing vessel, with graceful masts and wing-like spread of canvas, and I could not help thinking that to voyage in one of those must be much more romantic and pleasurable than in the prosaic modern iron ships.

One day a casual acquaintance interested me in Marysville on the St. Clair River, a little south of the thriving city of Port Huron. According to this informant it was a sleepy, decadent village, twenty years behind the times, without the inhabitants being aware of the fact. Its people were chiefly river pirates, and proud to be known as such; but if I would like to see the lowest strata of waterside dwellers I must hunt up the "river rats." They were downright thieves, and the pirates despised them. A river rat would carry off anything he could lay his hands on—he would steal from his best friend. As for the pirates, they simply took possession of whatever of value they found washed up on shore or floating down the river, the owner of which was not promptly on hand to prove his claim. Logs made up the bulk of their gains. These came to them marked on the butts with the stamp of the owner, but the pirates simply sawed the butts off and let the swift current carry them away. Then no one would be

able to prove who the logs had originally belonged to. They had a particularly rich harvest when a raft broke up.

I expected to find a rude, shabby hamlet whose free-booting inhabitants would be decidedly romantic. It was, however, a quiet little place of orderly cottages, grassy yards and tidy gardens, with fruit trees close about, and elms and maples shadowing the streets. Yes, and there were two or three churches; and a group of children on a street corner were talking religion.

"We're going to have a plenary indulgence next Sunday," remarked one of the girls.

"What in blazes is that?" asked a companion, and then turning to the others added, "Myrtle has swallowed the dictionary, and it's coming up in pieces."

I sought out the oldest inhabitant and inquired about river pirates, taking care to do so gently that I might not hurt his feelings in case he happened to be one himself. He was a good deal mystified. As a matter of fact, he said the people were mostly employed at neighboring salt works, and I thought best to change the subject and ask about old times.

"My folks moved to Port Huron when I was a baby," said the old man. "There was just sand and scrub oaks where the center of the town is now. The first steam sawmill anywhere in this part of the country had been built there, and father worked in it. They were getting out splendid timber, but it brought no price till the time of the Civil War. There was as yet no great

amount of traffic on the lakes, and only an occasional little sailing vessel or small steamer passed up or down the river.

“We saw rather more of Injuns than we did of whites at first. They were always travellin’ back’ards and for’ards here. In the fall they’d come over from Canada and go up Black River. Maybe there’d be thirty canoes. The Injuns would paddle up the little river and gather cranberries and stay all winter in the woods hunting, and in the spring they’d make maple sugar. Their canoes was often dugouts of pine or white ash, and I’ve seen a canoe made out of a butternut tree that would hold twenty-five men. Often they’d camp near the mill and put up wigwams made out of ellum bark. For weapons they mostly used bows and arrows.

“My companions was principally young Injuns, and I’ve played with ’em many a day. I got so I could understand their language pretty well, and I could work a canoe or shoot with a bow as well as any of ’em. I gol! we had more fun with black squirrels than anything else. Say, those squirrels were thick, and they were fine eatin’. We’d go ketchin’ ’em in the little scrubby oaks. If we see a squirrel on the ground we’d take after him and chase him up a tree. Then we’d throw clubs and shoot arrows at him. Sometimes we’d shake a squirrel out of a tree and ketch him in our hands to carry home and put in a cage. They’d bite like Sam Hill and make your blood fly, but we never used to





*Ancient mariners*

mind it. As soon as we could, we'd grip 'em by the head so they couldn't use their teeth.

"I often went with the Injun boys in a dugout to a marsh to spear fish. You have to be a little careful about navigatin' a dugout. It turns over easy, and I've been dumped out and got a soakin' more'n once. We'd get a mess of fish and then divide 'em. The Injun boys was inclined not to be fair about the dividing and would take much more than their share. But one white boy is equal to a dozen of 'em. I'd draw off with my paddle and slap 'em right and left, and they'd give in. I never was afraid of an Injun no more than I was of a squirrel. I heard stories of their scalping, but I never seen any on 'em who had much courage. An Injun will make a big splur, and you'd think he was goin' to eat you, and yet if you walk right up and give him a smash in the mouth, he's gone. We kept a sharp watch of 'em when they came around our homes. They don't steal, but they swipe, and they'll take a thing from right under your eyes and deny it.

"An Injun never forgets a favor—I'll say that for 'em. One night I was in the sawmill workin' around the engine, and I glanced up and for an instant saw a pair of eyes lookin' in at the window. I went to the door, but I couldn't see where in the dickens the owner of those eyes had gone to. So I continued with my work, at the same time keepin' watch of the window. Pretty soon the eyes were there again, and I jumped out and grabbed someone and drew him inside. It was an

Injun, and his wrists was handcuffed together. He held 'em up and shook the chain. 'Yow, yow!' he said.

"He'd been locked up somewhere for gettin' drunk. I took a cold chisel and got the handcuffs off, and the Injun was away like a flash. I didn't see him till the next fall. Then he came in a canoe and brought me a haunch of venison and some maple sugar and other stuff to show his gratitude.

"But if an Injun thinks you've done him an injury he's mean. He'll remember that injury longer than he will a favor—you bet your bottom dollar he will, and he'll get even with you.

"It was a perfect wilderness here when I was young, and the woods were full of game, and the water full of fish. Partridges were very plentiful and we got to know where they lived and which were their drumming logs. I've killed any amount of quail and wild turkeys. I shot a wild turkey right in that pine tree across the road, thirty-six years ago. There were lots more mush-rats than there are now, and the Injuns were fond of 'em for food. I like 'em myself, and so would you if you et 'em without knowin' what they were. We had all the venison we wanted. We could go to an Injun camp and buy a nice venison ham for twenty cents, or twenty-five at the outside; or perhaps father would shoot a deer. He'd send us boys to the woods leadin' a hound with a rope. By and by we'd let the dog go, and like enough in ten minutes we'd hear him bay. The animal the dog stirred up would make for the water by one of their

runways. The old hunters knew their nature just as well as we do that of a horse, and father could tell pretty near where to stand to shoot when the deer came out of the woods. If the deer got into the water he'd follow it with a boat.

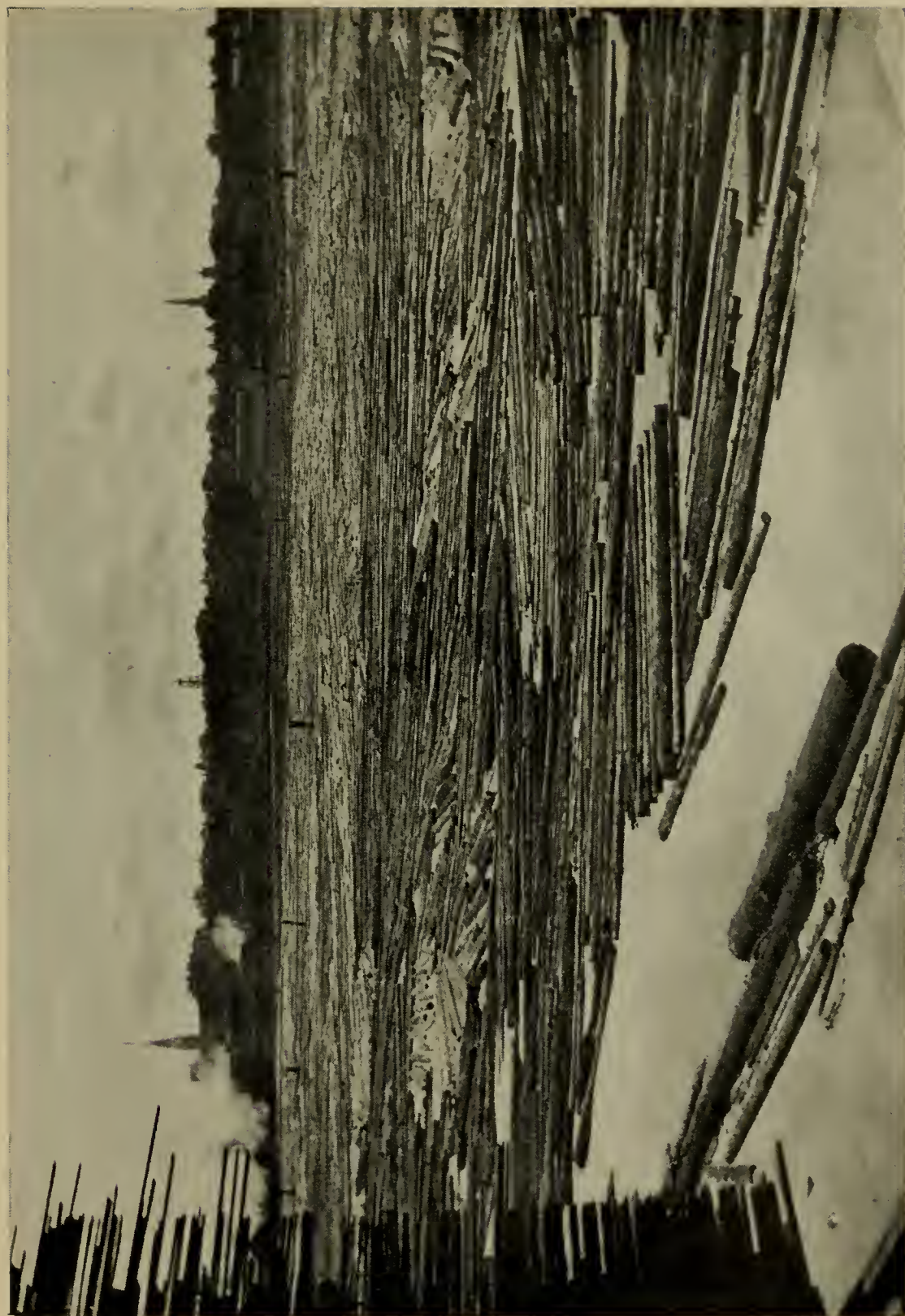
"Our guns weren't good for anything. The first I remember were all old flintlocks, and you had to carry a great big cowhorn at your side full of powder. Your gun wouldn't go off half the time that you pulled the trigger, and when it did go off it made so much smoke you couldn't see. Some of 'em, my gracious! would kick you down—yes, and kick you after you was down; and they wouldn't shoot hardly across the road. You'd see a deer perhaps six or eight rods off. Click! your gun would go without discharging, and the deer would be out of sight in a jiffy. But the deer wouldn't run far, and you could steal up and try again. They were tame. Lots of mornings in the late fall and early winter I've seen as many as half a dozen feeding at our wheat stack.

"Sometimes a buck would charge you. I don't recall any other wild animals which showed that much courage. I've seen a good many bears, but they'd run like the very old Nick from you. I never had much use for a bear. I'd save the hide, but the meat is greasy and coarse. I can't say I relish it, and I'd give away a chunk to anyone that would accept it and throw the rest away.

"Of all the wild birds the pigeons were the most

numerous. As recently as twenty-five years ago they flew so thick I couldn't see the sun, but since the country has been cleared up, and their nesting-places spoiled, they've all gone. They were a bluish color with a long tail, and the male had a red breast. The spring, or the fore part of summer, was the time for the great flocks. A tamarack swamp near here was a favorite nesting-place, and I've seen eighteen nests there on a single tree. The nests were a few little sticks across a limb close to the tree-trunk. Only two eggs would be laid in a nest. After the young were old enough to fly, the birds scattered, but they were still pretty thick in places where food was plenty. If a man had a field of wheat or anything like that ripening he had to watch it and protect it from them; and in the autumn you'd find a good many in the woods where there were beechnuts.

"Their big flights were made early in the morning, and they went very swift. If the wind blew hard they flew high, but in a light warm south wind they flew low, just skimming along over the water or the ground or the treetops. You could throw clubs at 'em and get all the birds you wanted in a little while, or you could take a stout sapling with twigs on the end and whip 'em down. I'd go with my shotgun right over next to the woods beside a stump, and at every discharge they'd drop like hailstones. Some men made a business of trapping and killing 'em to ship off, but I just got 'em for fun to eat and to give around to everyone that wanted 'em. I remember once when I'd got up early



. Logs



to shoot pigeons my wife brought out a big bushel basket about nine o'clock, and we carried it back heapin' full. 'I don't know what we're goin' to do with all of 'em,' I says.

" 'I know,' says she. 'We're goin' to pick 'em.'

"Well, we dressed 'em and filled the boiler and the kittles, and she cooked 'em. Then she put 'em away in crocks, pickled the same as pigs' feet, and flavored with cloves. They were fine for lunch—yes, beautiful. When I felt a little hungry I'd take a fork and go get one to eat with bread and butter. It made a good meal.

"We had log houses, and at first the roofs were of split shakes. Later we had handmade shingles. That's what I've got on this house. They were put on fifty-one years ago, and the roof ain't leaked a drop since. Some old codger who was kind o' played out would take a supply of pork and potatoes and go off to the woods where there was some big pines suitable for his purpose on government land, and camp for the winter and make shingles. Toward spring he'd get someone to come with a yoke of oxen and draw his shingles out. He'd sell 'em for seventy-five cents or so a thousand. You couldn't buy 'em today for five dollars, and they can't be got as good at any price.

"The lumber company was glad to sell its cut-off land for ten shillings an acre. Oh, gol! those old farmers got rich. They picked right up. Say for instance you had a piece of land cleared, you could plant potatoes and such like, and sell all you raised to the

soldiers that were stationed here. The potatoes were great big fellows. We'd get a peck out of a hill. You could buy a first-class nice cow for ten dollars, and at that price you could afford to sell your butter cheap. It had to be awful good to bring ten cents a pound. The cattle run in the woods wherever they had a mind to, and it was no expense raisin' 'em. Oh, this used to be a pretty good place for a poor man!

"One cow belonging to each farmer wore a bell, and people knew the different bells by the sound. The cows fed in company, and when a boy went to get his own cows he brought all the cows along to the village to be milked. After the weather begun to get cold in the fall they'd come up to the farm buildings every night of their own accord, and we'd yard 'em. We had wheat-straw and stalks and hay to winter 'em on.

"Just outside our yard fence was a trough dug out of a big log, and into that we emptied the skim milk we didn't want to use, and the swill, for the hogs. They ran free in the woods, too; but they didn't get wild, and the only drawback was that the bears now and then killed some of 'em. Yes, there were hundreds of hogs runnin' loose, and in the autumn they got fat on the shack—that is, the acorns and the beech and hazel nuts. They lived right in the forest the whole year. Just before winter set in we'd hitch the oxen to a sled and drag around through the woods, and when we saw a good big hog father would say, 'Take that feller!' and we'd shoot it. We killed what hogs we wanted and

brought 'em home on the sled; and you never'd hear a word among the neighbors about, 'You've got my hog.' There was enough for everyone.

"In later years the people used to have a bee when they wanted to lay in a supply of pork. All the boys and dogs would go chasing through the woods and drive the porkers into a pen in some man's yard, where a little corn or wheat had been scattered. Then each man would take as many as he wanted and the rest would be turned loose.

"On that new ground of ours an acre of wheat, if it was anyways good, would furnish enough flour to last a big family two years. We stacked the wheat near the barn and thrashed it as we wanted it. Say it was a stormy morning so we couldn't work outdoors to advantage, we'd flail out four or five bushels, get our oxen and carry it to mill. We couldn't tell how soon we'd get back—depended on how many were ahead of us. Maybe we'd be gone two hours, maybe all day.

"Any amount of blackberries, strawberries, and raspberries grew on the cut-off land, and it was nothing uncommon to find a hollow tree with six or seven hundred of honey in it. Father got to be a real expert bee hunter, and he'd follow a swarm for miles to find their honey hoard. If we wanted maple sugar we could go to the Injuns and exchange fifty pounds of flour or a chunk of pork worth perhaps seventy-five cents for a hundred pounds of sugar put up in a nice birch-bark box. Often we'd make our own sugar. Half a dozen of

us would go into the woods and build a camp, tap trees, and take turns boiling. Oh, we fared well, and the only fault I could find with this country was that there wa'n't any fruit to amount to anything.

"We had stiddy cold weather during the winter, except for a thaw in January. About the first of April the weather would break, the snow melted, and we'd get the crops started. We didn't mind the cold of the winters. If you had a good ax, and there was a couple of stoves in the house you could keep as warm as you wanted to without expense. The more wood you burned the better, because that helped to clear the land. We'd fell the trees in the near woods, trim off the branches, and hitch on our oxen and draw 'em to the door, where we'd cut 'em up. We had no matches. Flint and steel served instead. We'd get punk in a rotten soft maple tree, dry it, and use it to strike sparks into. Some of the old men carried a flint and steel in their pockets to light their pipes. In summer, if there was a hollow elm handy, either standing or fallen, we'd start a fire in that. It would burn maybe for months, and we'd bring coals from it whenever we needed to kindle our house fires.

"After a while we kept sheep, and my mother spun all the yarn for our stockin's, and all the thread for our woolen clothes. Them was the shirts and things to wear! They was thick as a board. Mother would often be up spinning till ten at night. I had a couple of sisters older'n me, and they'd generally knit of an evening.

Probably us fellers would be crackin' nuts. A roustin' good fire would be burnin' in the fireplace, and it was very cheerful in the old kitchen.

"The woolen thread was sent away to be wove into cloth, but we done our own coloring. In the fall we'd get a woman who understood makin' clothes to come and stay in the family a while and make us two suits all around. A shoemaker would come in the same way and make footwear for us out of leather we'd bought.

"After I grew up I worked summers on the lake vessels. I've sailed all over these lakes and been out in some pretty rough weather. I've set right down on the cabin floor to eat, when the vessel was rolling bad in a storm. The table would be bottom side up, and the stove all smashed to pieces, and I'd hold my plate in my lap and slide back and forth as the waves pitched the boat this way and that. But in the course of time I decided to settle down, and here I've lived ever since. With the associations it has with my youth no other region can compare with this for me."

I came away feeling very well satisfied with what I had learned from the oldest inhabitant; yet I confess to some lingering regrets that he was not a pirate.

NOTE.—Detroit is one of the great industrial centers of America, and as such is decidedly interesting. It has had a noteworthy history which also lends to its attraction, and its suburban resorts along the river are famous for their beauty. Here the shipping of the lakes passing up and down the narrow waterway can be seen to excep-

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tional advantage. The great freighters are almost constantly in sight, for the amount of traffic on these freshwater seas, with more than thirty million people living in the states bordering their shores, is tremendous. Among the other craft you may see one of the aristocrats of the lake fleet—a passenger steamer. These steamers are models of comfort, the larger and more recent ones resembling in style and size the ocean liners, and the cost of travelling in them is wonderfully low. Of the freighters the type of vessel that has the most curious individuality is the whaleback, a blunt-ended hulk with rounded gunwales, which from its appearance and its manner of rooting and rolling about in the waves has gained the nickname of the “pig.” These vessels are unique and picturesque, but not entirely successful; for they are so rigid a slight bumping against wharves or locks makes the steel plates cut the rivets.

It is easy to make a jaunt into Canada from Detroit, and a visit to some of the little French Canadian villages furnishes a most agreeable experience.

A pleasant way to see the country along the waterside from Detroit to Port Huron is to go by trolley the entire sixty miles.





*Ring the schoolbell*

## VII

### A MICHIGAN FOREST FIRE

**A**LPENA on Thunder Bay" had sounded very attractive to me; for was not the name of the town suggestive of the Alps, and that of the bay no less suggestive of rocky shores and storms and tragic wrecks? But there are no mountains, and there are no rocks, and the Bay is no more subject to storms than are the adjacent waters of Lake Huron. Indeed, the Bay is quite mild, with low, wooded shores, except opposite the city. There the sawmills have taken possession, and their stacks of rubbish and piers piled with lumber reach out into the shallows and monopolize the waterfront for miles. I questioned one of the local residents about the name of the Bay.

"Most names," said he, "are given by chance. Probably some early exploring party encountered a heavy thunderstorm here. I'll give you an instance of how names start. My father owned a tract of land where a few shacks had been put up, and he called it 'Shanty Plain.' You'll find good buildings and nice farms there now, but it still retains the old name."

I visited one of the bayside sawmills where some of the remnants of Michigan's great forests are being converted into building material. The state originally

included the most notable white pine region in the world, and by 1850 lumbering was an important industry. Even as late as 1890 four-fifths of the state was reported to be forested. But now the former woodland is largely denuded, and practically no white pine is left.

On the water near the mill were many acres of floating logs restrained by booms, and these logs were moving up the runways and disappearing in the mill at the rate of more than one a minute. Everywhere the air was athrill with the shrill, high-keyed voice of the saws. The speed with which they sliced the logs into boards and planks and beams was marvellous, and it was surprising how few men were needed to guide the complicated machinery. As if by magic, after the lengthwise sawing was done, the lumber was trimmed free of all waste, cut to regular lengths, and sorted, and then it was loaded on trucks that were dragged away by horse power on light railways to be piled for drying. The lumber is not shipped at once lest the moisture in it should ferment and discolor the wood and start decay. The drying process lasts at least a month or two, and if the weather is wet or cold a decidedly longer delay is necessary before it is safe to pack the lumber in a close mass in the holds of the freight steamers.

A little river joins the bay at Alpena, and serves as a highway for logs cut along side it for fifty miles or more back inland. "They've been lumbering there ever since I can remember, and I'm thirty-seven years old," said one man with whom I talked, "but not much is left

worth cutting. While I was still in my teens I began to go in the woods working at the lumber camps in the winter. Them days we wouldn't take hardwood or hemlock and this small scrubby stuff—we wouldn't look at it. We'd cut the hemlock trees, but after we'd peeled 'em in order to sell the bark to the tanneries, we left the logs to rot."

The man was chopping near the road in a bit of young forest that fire and wind had reduced to a blackened prostrate tangle. I asked him what had happened to his woodland. "Well, sir, I'll tell you," he replied. "Two years ago a fire got in here. I don't know how it started. Probably some of the Alpena boys set it. I carried water, and I shoveled dirt on the fire, and my neighbors helped me. Sometimes we'd think we'd got it out, but it was burning in dry muck full of little fine roots. There it would smoulder, and the first thing we knew a spark would appear at the surface and the fire was running through the woods like the dickens again. I fought it day and night, for I'd only recently bought the farm, and to have my woodland all burnt over meant quite a loss to me. But there wa'n't much use. The fire took off about four inches of mucky surface, below which was sand. That left the trees with nothing for their roots to grip, and the first wind bent 'em over. So here they are all layin' with their roots up, and of very little value even for firewood.

"I thought I was goin' to get a good start this year, but we had a white frost on the Fourth of July which

killed my cucumbers and all like that and hurt my potatoes badly. Our season is a little too short, but you take the Poles and the Germans who've settled through here—they're thrifty people, and most have got some money ahead. They spend little, and the whole family works. That's one trouble with this region, the men expect the women to work harder than they do themselves."

I walked on out into the country. The woods were taking on a tinge of autumnal yellow, sumachs reddened the pastures, and a bleak wind that presaged the approach of winter was blowing. At times the sky was gloomed with threatening clouds, and then they would drift away and leave a clear, deep blue sky. To escape from the chill blast I made a call at a country school. The building was of wood, but was painted to imitate brick. The yard was unshaded, and there was brushy cut-off land roundabout. A log schoolhouse had been in use five years previous, the young woman teacher informed me, but it was now a hog pen on the premises of a neighboring farmer. The present building was not erected on the spot where I saw it. Considerable strife had been aroused over the question of its placing, and after it was finished a dissatisfied crowd got together and moved it to the location it now occupies.

The teacher was intelligent and faithful, but she was without special training, and the children, who were from various foreign-speaking families, were not making





*Clearing up the burnt land*

very brilliant progress. Their reading, for instance, was expressionless, stumbling, and stupid—an exercise in the recognition of words—not in the apprehension of ideas. Right in the center of the room was a big stove which baked the children near it, while those on the farther edges might be shivering. The teacher got to the schoolhouse at half-past eight in the morning, made the fire, swept, and then rang the bell that hung in a little cupola perched on the front gable. She said she had a comfortable boarding-place, but that the teachers in some rustic districts fared hardly in that respect.

After I left the schoolhouse I followed a side road until it dwindled to a grassy trail that showed only the faintest ruts of wheels, and here I found a little log house inhabited by a Swedish family. There was no cellar under it, for the ground was too wet. Moreover, the earth was exceedingly stony, and the Swede affirmed that the stones extended clear down to the old country. He had neither a horse nor a cow, and the only tool he used in starting his potatoes in the unplowed stump-land was a hoe. His children walked to school, a distance of three and a half miles. "But that's nothing to a kid," said he. "It does 'em good to get out and hustle, and besides they often ketch a ride in winter."

He soon turned the subject of our conversation to politics, and informed me that he was a socialist. His place did not seem to indicate any superlative ability as a manager, yet I discovered that he had very definite

notions as to how to manage the affairs of the entire country.

Not far from Alpena occurred in 1908 one of the most tragic of Michigan's forest fires. There was a considerable loss of life, and the town of Metz was completely wiped out. Most of the lives were lost on a freight train that was attempting to carry a load of Metz dwellers to safety. The engineer of the train survived, and I called on him at his home in Alpena. I had been told that he was terribly burned and "had an awful-lookin' face on him yet." Certainly he would carry the scars as long as he lived.

"Metz," said he, "was a place of two hundred inhabitants—a sort of trading center and sawmill village. It was burned on October fifteenth. There'd been fires all summer, and often the smoke in the air was so dense we could hardly see a hundred yards, and it made our eyes smart. That October day I got to Metz about noon and waited for orders. I was there several hours, and no orders came. We knew by the smoke that a big fire was burning off west of us, and a hurricane was driving it in our direction. The village was wedged in between two pieces of woodland, and on the windward side were great heaps of ties and posts along the railroad, and on that side, too, was a sawmill with many months' accumulation of sawed lumber around it. The place was doomed, and would evidently be so hot and swept by flames that no one could stay there and survive. It was decided that some of the women and children and





*The pump at the back door*

old people should go out of the threatened region on the train. After loading a lot of furniture and valuables on a box car, fifty or sixty of them with their bundles and bags got on one of these iron gondola coal cars. The rest of the train consisted of four other coal cars, three of 'em loaded with cedar posts and one with hemlock bark, which we thought we could save.

"The smoke rolled in, and it got as dark as night, and then the fire swept into one corner of the village and the church began to burn. I couldn't wait for orders any longer, and we started, but we hadn't gone far when we overtook a man and his wife. They were on their way down the track to their home, about two miles away. I took them onto the engine. They were distressed about their children who were at home with no one to look after 'em except an awful old woman—their grandmother. But she took 'em over to a field, and they escaped. It was so dark I couldn't see on ahead, and I couldn't tell whether I was running into danger or not. I thought the fire was behind us, but we soon were in burning woods. Then the bark which was on a car just behind the tender caught on fire, and burning pieces began to fly back onto the people in the open car.

"A little farther on we came out of the woods, and here on a siding a number of cars loaded with tan-bark were standing. On the other side of the main track were piles of cedar posts, and the bark and posts were all on fire, though I didn't know it until we were right between 'em. Then the engine went off the track. The

rails had been warped by the heat. We couldn't have stopped in a worse place for those that were on the engine. There was fire on each side, and the car of bark back of the tender was burning fiercely. The man and woman jumped off, and the fireman got into the water tank, while I ran around in the cab and on the tender looking out this way and that amid the flying sparks trying to see if there was some chance to escape. It was then I was burnt. My only hope was with the fireman in the tank, and I got in there. We were shoulder deep in the water, and we kept splashing it up on each other's faces to get some relief from the suffocating smoke. I was burned worse than the fireman, but I seemed to be standing it better than he did. When he showed signs of collapse I'd slap and shake him.

"Tan bark will burn a long time, and it makes a terrible hot fire—hot as a lot of oil barrels, and the heat from the car behind and the cars on the side track was warming up the tank. I made up my mind I'd get out of there. By then the cedar posts had burned down considerable, and I put my hand up once or twice and felt that the heat on that side was not nearly as bad as it had been. We could hardly speak. I was chokin' and he was chokin', but we managed to say enough to agree to climb out and try to get away. So out I jumped and ran along beside the engine. The coals lay there a foot deep, and my shoes was burned so the leather cracked, but I got beyond the embers of the cedar piles and turned to look for the fireman. I

thought he'd be right behind me. He didn't come, and I went on alone following the track toward Posen, the next town, three miles distant. There was fire all the way and once or twice I thought I was goin' to get ketched again. With what I'd gone through, and the exertion of running, I was pretty near all in when I got to Posen, and I had to spend six months in the hospital.

"The fireman never left the tank. The hose burnt off and let the water out. Then it was just like an oven in there, and he couldn't have lasted long. The man and woman on the engine with us burned, and so did the brakeman; but the people on the coal car were not so surrounded by fire as we were, and their case was not so hopeless. Thirteen of 'em perished, and the balance of 'em escaped. Two managed to return to Metz. The rest got away to open fields. Some had their hands and faces painfully blistered, but only a few were permanently disfigured. Those of the Metz people who weren't on the train got out on the cultivated land and passed through the fire uninjured."

Metz had been rebuilt, and I determined to see it. The place proved to be something like a Wild West village of the arid regions in appearance. It stands on a treeless, sandy waste where grow scanty patches of grass and weeds, and the buildings are of the plainest type, some of them mere shacks. The only thing burnable that did not burn was a tall cedar flagpole. This had been set in place a few days before the fire, and the wood was full of sap. It stood close to a store, and the

flames bit into it slightly on that side, but otherwise it was unharmed.

A mile and a half down the track is the place where the freight train burned. This was such a peaceful spot when I saw it that I could hardly realize it had been the scene of a dire tragedy. Here was a siding growing to thistles, which half concealed a strewing of rusty stoves and pieces of iron beds that had been on the ill-fated train. Roundabout were open fields, two or three farmhouses were in sight, and I could hear the pastoral tinkle of cowbells, the singing of birds, the hum of insects.

The region had not been by any means densely wooded, and I wondered that such a ravaging fire could have swept it. Everywhere the forest was checkered with farms, and it did not appear as if a fire could run fast or far. Yet rarely did even the smallest patch of trees escape, and when I looked from rising ground, that dreary desolation of bare-twigged, blackened woodland stretched away on all sides to the horizon. Some trees that were not quite dead were putting forth a few struggling shoots from their fire-scarred trunks, and there was a thick undergrowth of saplings and weeds.

I rambled out among the farms and stopped to eat dinner with a hospitable German family. Their house was a comfortable, fair-sized dwelling, but not very substantial or shapely, and rather untidy in its surroundings. It was well off the main highway and was



*Grubbing up stumps*



approached by a ponderously fenced lane where the pigs rooted in great content. We sat at table in the kitchen, with the sink on one side of us, and the cook-stove on the other. Before we began eating, the youngest daughter, a fresh, vigorous schoolgirl in her early teens rose and asked a long blessing in German.

None of the family could speak of the fire without emotion, though they had fared far better than most of the neighbors. "About one o'clock that day we men-folks went to work drawing gravel," said the farmer. "We'd got one load on when we saw a big smoke over to the southwest. The wind was blowing hard and the smoke looked dangerous. My son-in-law who was helping us lived in that direction, some four miles away. Says I, 'You get right back home.'

"He had his gun with him, and he agreed to shoot it three times if he thought from what he saw on the way that the fire was comin' here. He couldn't have gone half the distance when we heard his gun, and he shot a dozen times which made us conclude things were pretty serious. We quit work and went to the house. The boy was getting out a pair of horses intending to start ploughing. 'Go right back into the stable with 'em,' I says, 'and take their harnesses off and turn 'em into the field.'

"Then we went to pumping, and filled everything on the place that would hold water. We could hear the fire now comin' with a roar like a heavy thunderstorm. Pretty soon it throwed into my woods. I went to the

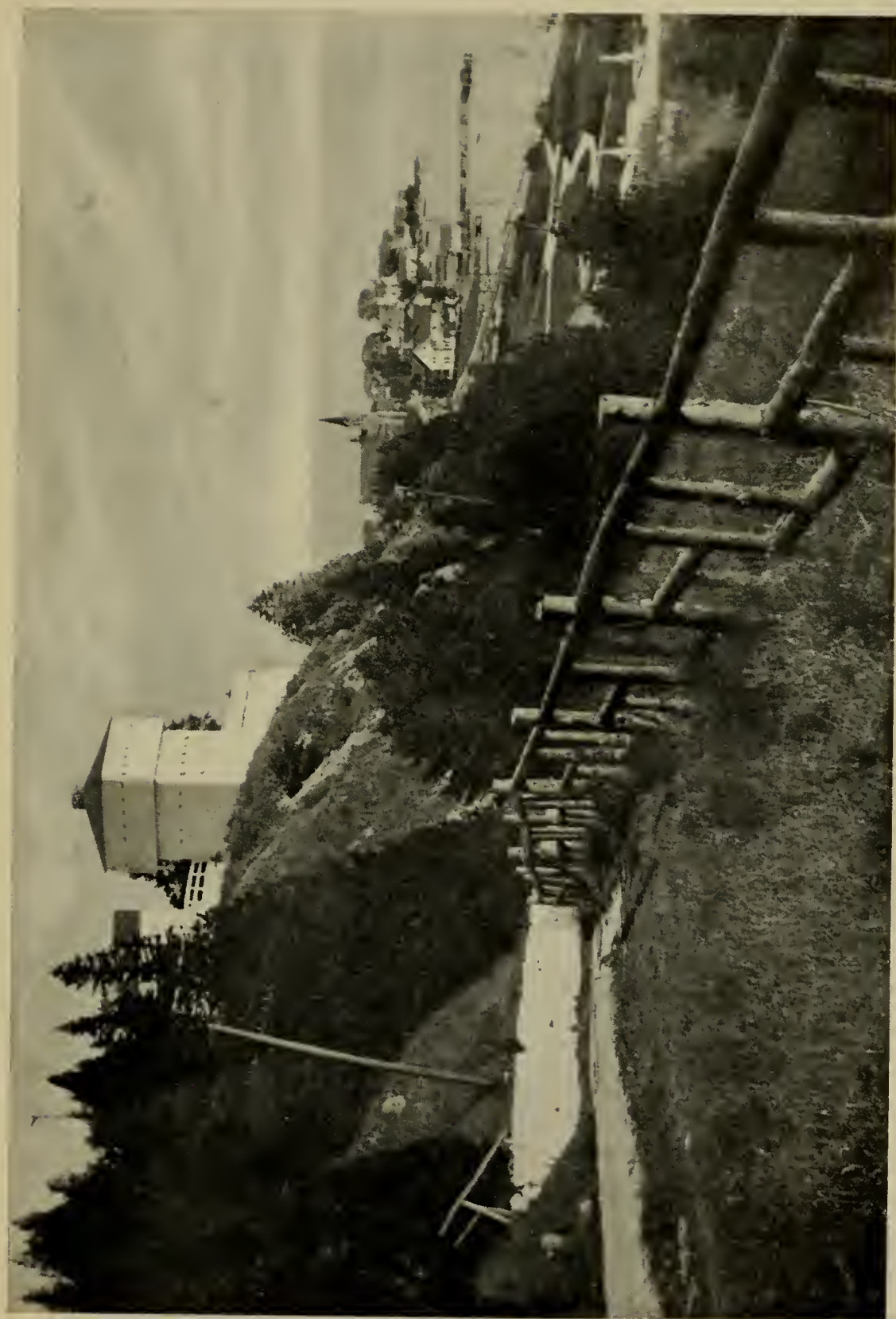
edge of the timber to see if there was any chance to stop it. I saw there wasn't and I said, 'Let her go.'

"My wife had been to call on a neighbor. By and by she came home and she kept saying, 'We're all goin' to burn.'

" 'No,' says I, 'we won't.' I had to repeat that half a dozen times and tell her to get right to work.

"Well, it did look as if the whole world was comin' to an end, but we stayed right here and fought the fire. It was dark at four o'clock already. The smoke was so thick we were all choked with it, and everybody was holdin' their eyes when they had a chance. The wind would shoot the flames right over the treetops, and then down into the fields. Big balls of fire were flyin' through the air clear across my farm, so that almost at once the woods on the other side were burning. I had a pile of ties worth two hundred dollars in a field half a mile from the woods, but they burned. When that freight train from Metz went past we could hear the people on it hollerin' and cryin'. The car in front and the car behind were on fire, and it was a lucky thing the train got wrecked. Otherwise, they'd all burnt.

"We wet things down pretty thoroughly, but our buildings caught fire again and again. I'd set watchers here and there on the premises, and I had one of my sons take off his shoes so he could walk stockin'-foot around on the house-roof. Once the boy who was watching the barn shouted that he'd seen a great big flame go right in the barn window. Sure enough, the



*The picturesque old town of Mackinac*

was what they took under their arms, and often that wasn't enough to make a pillow out of.

"For two days the air was dense with smoke, and then we had a little rain. That cleared the air and put out the smouldering embers. The fire burned a strip twelve miles wide and only stopped when it got to the lake. It took more than half the scattered houses—yes, I guess three-fourths of them. Occasionally a life was lost, and there were a good many narrow escapes, and some persons were so crippled up they were never good for anything afterward. One of my sons taught school five miles south of here. When he noticed how heavy the smoke was gettin' he took the children to their homes and then started for his own home on his bicycle, and he was almost burned comin' through a swamp that was on fire. Then there was the old folks—my wife's father and mother. The old lady was sick abed, and when the old man saw that the fire was goin' to get their place he took her on his back and carried her to a neighbor's. Pretty soon that house was in danger, too. So he carried her to the cemetery, and stayed there until the fence was burning and the grass caught afire. Then he went to another neighbor's, and that house didn't burn. But the experience was too much for his wife. It finished her up, and she died in about five weeks.

"Some of those whose homes burned slept out that cold October night. There was a woman and two children I know who did that. They had only the

clothes they wore, and the woman took off one of her skirts and wrapped it around the children.

“Quite a few farm creatures were burned—some in the barns and sheds, and some in the woods. The hogs were in the woods after beechnuts, and the first thing they knew the fire had perhaps surrounded them. Lots of cattle and horses were caught in the same way. Oh, gosh! it was bad.

“The fire ran through most of the grass in the fields, and the country was all black. She looked tough. There were a few grass patches on my farm that escaped and the cattle all piled in here and grubbed the grass up by the roots almost. The cattle usually got most of their feed in the woods, even in winter, but now nothing was left for them there. People were obliged to sell most of their stock, and they killed others to eat. They only kept one, two, or three head, and they had to buy feed to take care of those. The cattle they sold went for nearly nothing. Some of these cut-throat fellows came in and took advantage of our necessities, and picked up at small prices what the farmers were obliged to sell. There are always men who, when they see anyone in trouble, are ready to take the last cent he’s got.

“The railroad company built what they called a house for each burned-out family, but it wasn’t fit for a dog to live in. It was just a slant-roof shanty, about twelve by fourteen feet, made of one thickness of boards and covered, roof and all, with tarred paper. During the winter the men got out timber in order to build,

and the next spring most managed to put up some sort of a decent dwelling. Two years ago everybody was doin' well, and you'd have to hunt a long while before you'd find a farm you could buy. But that fire just fixed us in great shape. There's hardly a place now that can't be bought, and cheap, too. It was quite a setback even for me, though none of my family were hurt and none of my buildings were burned. We had a farmers' mutual insurance company here, and I had to pay nearly two hundred dollars that year as compared with about five dollars on an ordinary year. My rail fences were all burned and I spent ninety dollars for wire to replace 'em, and my woodland was damaged over two thousand dollars. Practically the only trees left of any value are the cedars. We're still getting them out for posts and railroad ties. The wood don't deteriorate rapidly, and it will be good for a dozen years yet.

"Fine forest covered all the country when I came here in 1878. I'd been living in New York state, but I wanted to own a place myself, and I didn't see much chance there with land a hundred and fifty to two hundred dollars an acre. An older brother had been up here to lumber, and he wrote that I could get some good farm land cheap. The company he worked for had bought the region supposing it was pine land, but come to look at it they found that through here it was all hardwood, which, at that time brought no price at all, and they wanted to get the land off their hands. I took

forty acres at two dollars an acre and paid twenty dollars down. That was all the money I had.

“Twelve miles from here, on the shore of Lake Huron, was a village, and I came there by boat, and carried everything I needed the rest of the way on my back. A few men had settled here already during the previous year or two, and I was able to get potatoes of them, but I had to lug in what other food I needed and my cooking utensils and blankets and a featherbed. You’d think the bed would be too bulky, but I wrapped it up pretty tight. I’ve known more than one man to bring a stove in here on his back. We couldn’t carry more’n enough food to last a week or so, and then we’d go and get a fresh supply of flour, salt pork, and a few groceries.

“In some directions there was only trails, but from here to Alpena there was a sly road. That’s a road chopped out and cleared up by the settlers just wide enough to go through with an old jumper, which is a kind of rough sled that has runners made of small trees with a natural crook in ’em. The jumper did very well to sneak around on a wild road, and if it struck a stone or a tree root, that didn’t make no difference. The sly road was a great help to a man who had a horse. He could drag in his stuff and not have to carry it all on his back. The road was crooked and took the easiest way, always avoiding obstructions and bad places. If there was a swamp it couldn’t very well go around they put in corduroy. During most of the year the corduroy was fairly firm, but in the spring, or after a heavy rain, the

logs were about the same as afloat. You could stick a pole down into the muck and not find any bottom hardly. It was ticklish business then crossing the corduroy with fifty pounds of flour on your back. The logs would begin to roll, and perhaps off you'd go, but you were careful to watch out for your flour. Sometimes you went in up to your waist. However, you'd clamber back on the corduroy and go on and think nothin' of it.

"I got here in the fall, and I soon had some logs ready to build a house. The neighbors helped me one day shaping the logs and putting up the housewalls. We had ropes and skids, and a man was stationed at each corner to chop the ends of the logs so they'd fit together. It was fifteen by twenty-two feet, and you can see the building yet in my barnyard where I use it for a hen-house. After the walls were up I cut out places for the doors and windows and put on the roof myself. I didn't need a chimney. I just ran a stovepipe out through the roof. Probably it looks to you like a hard and lonesome task hewing out a home in the wilderness, but I never had any desire to go back where I come from.

"During the first winter I slashed down some timber which I burned in the spring, and so I got in a chunk of turnips and a patch of potatoes. I earned something, too, by working at roadmaking. The commissioners were running a good highway through here, and the neighborhood would get together and we'd bid for sections of it. A path a rod wide had to be stumped clear

and leveled off, and in wet places we put in corduroy, the sticks for which had to be at least six inches through and extend the full width of the cleared strip.

“We raised splendid crops on our new land, and there were no weeds except fireweed; but the weeds have come in since, and now we have lots of work fighting them. Mosquitoes used to be troublesome. Oh, them mosquitoes! they used to be thick all over, but was more thicker in the swamps. We didn’t have money enough to buy fly-netting to keep ’em out of our house. They were worst in May and June. After sundown they’d start biting and they didn’t let you have any peace until nine or ten o’clock. They were bad again in the morning, so you couldn’t sleep after four o’clock. Often we’d drive ’em out of the house by takin’ an old kittle, putting a few chips in it, and makin’ a good smoke. We make a smudge that way on our porch nowadays, or we couldn’t stand it to sit out there on summer evenings.

“Deer were pretty thick the first ten or twelve years, and I’ve seen dozens of ’em in a flock. We had only old muskets with percussion caps. If you didn’t hit the deer you fired at, it would run a little way and stop, but too far away for your musket to reach it with a second shot. When the modern rifles became common they cleaned the deer out. We had a few bears. I heard the dogs barking one evening after it was gettin’ dark, and I went out and see some creature that I thought was a calf. I decided to drive it back into the woods

and find the place where it got through the fence into the clearing, but when I came near it the animal r'ared up and showed his teeth. I knew he was a bear then, and I called the dogs to sick him. While I was tryin' to lay hands on a stick for a weapon they drove him off, and he got away.

"We enjoyed this new country, and were contented with the simple things we had to do with. In those days, if any of us wanted to go anywhere within a few miles we'd pick up our feet and go. Now we have to have horses and buggies and everything else; but at this house we're still old fashioned enough to walk back and forth to church a mile and a half away, summer and winter. As a whole, it seems to me as if the wants of our people had multiplied too fast, and that we work harder without getting any more fun than we used to have as pioneers. Yet if it hadn't been for this fire that has brought desolation and poverty, prosperity would be general throughout this region."

NOTE.—Most tourists would hardly care to linger about Thunder Bay or in the desolation of the region through which recent forest fires have raged; but there are many little lakes and streams scattered about the country that are wildly beautiful and furnish excellent fishing. Nor should one forget the attractions of Lake Huron, of which Thunder Bay is an arm. It is the most irregular of the Great Lakes and its varied charm is still further enhanced by the presence of no less than three thousand islands.

## VIII

### THE STRAITS OF MACKINAC

**N**ORTHERN Michigan is in many portions a veritable paradise for the seeker after healthful recreation. Its abounding streams, its hundreds of lakes, its clear bracing atmosphere, and its opportunities for hunting, fishing, canoeing, sailing, and motor-boating draw thither great numbers of people every summer. The resorts are many, but I think the most charming of them all is Mackinac Island, in the straits of the same name, where a narrow passage links Lake Michigan with Lake Huron. The island is about three and a half miles long and two broad—a rock-girt plateau sitting like an emerald gem amid the placid waters. Its name was formerly spelled Michilimackinac, which was an Indian term meaning Great Turtle. This refers to a fancied resemblance of the island to the back of a huge turtle, as seen from a distance. In the remote past it was a favorite sporting and camping-ground of various Indian tribes, and when the whites arrived it became the seat of justice, and base of supplies, and center of trade of a vast territory.

Marquette wintered on the island in 1670. Writing from there, he mentions among other things that, "This place is the most noted in these regions for the abun-

dance of its fishes; for, according to the Indian saying, 'This is the home of the fishes.' Elsewhere, although they exist in large numbers, is not properly their 'home.' "

He further mentions that, "The winds occasion no small embarrassment to the fishermen; for this is the central point between the great lakes which surround it, and which seem incessantly tossing ball at each other. No sooner has the wind ceased blowing from Lake Michigan than Lake Huron hurls back the gale it has received, and Lake Superior in its turn sends forth its blast from another quarter. Thus the game is played from one to the other; and as these lakes are of vast extent, the winds cannot be otherwise than boisterous, especially in the autumn."

The Straits generally freeze over about the middle of January, and continue closed until the latter part of April. Formerly freight and passengers going north and south by railroad were transferred across the ice on sledges, the terminals being Mackinaw City and St. Ignace, with a ten-mile channel between. One year a railway track was laid on the ice, and the trains themselves went across. Now two enormous train-carrying steamers, equipped with special ice-breaking apparatus, keep a path open all winter. Besides a screw at the stern to propel the vessel there is one at the bow which sucks the water from under the ice so that the boat climbing on the frozen mass breaks it down and crowds it aside. Two, three, and even four feet of blue ice have





*A village wayside*

been crushed in this way. Only once has the ice proved a match for the ice-crusher. In the struggle the broken cakes were piled so high about the vessel that it could not be seen from the shores. There it lay three days before the sister crusher, by breaking the surrounding ice, succeeded in setting the helpless steamer free. When the weather is very bitter the two boats are going back and forth all the time to keep the path from freezing too firmly. These ice crushers are an American invention, and have been copied in all northern waters, abroad as well as in our own land.

The summer climate of the Straits, and especially that of Mackinac Island, is peculiarly equable. The island does not have to endure the extreme heat of the mainland, and so kindly is nature, and so long are the days, which, with the twilight, leave a night of scarce six hours, that both its vegetable and animal life are said to have unusual vigor. In support of this claim it is declared that a Mackinac hop-vine has been known to grow eighteen inches in twenty-four hours.

I went to the island from Mackinaw City in a small steamer which makes frequent trips every day during the season. Occasionally, however, there is an interruption. "We had a storm last Saturday," said one of the men on the boat, "and the waves dashed right over the Mackinaw wharf. No boats crossed the Straits that day. The water here is nine hundred feet deep, and when you get it stirred up it's doin' some business."

I observed that the boat was equipped with two

gambling machines for the entertainment of the passengers during the half or three-quarters of an hour voyage. One was called "The Dewey," and it bore a portrait of the admiral. That seemed as vicious a misuse of a respected name as the posters I saw in some of the towns advertising "Tolstoi Cigarettes." But I suppose a manufacturing concern or a steamship company that encourages gambling cannot be expected to have any compunctions about the desecration of men who have done noble things.

We made for a little harbor on the south shore of the island. The narrow level along the crescent of the harbor was crowded with buildings, and behind rose steep bluffs crowned with a stout-walled old fort that has three blockhouses to add still further to its stoutness. The village with its narrow crooked streets, its little churches and occasional quaint structures of long ago, and that ancient fort on the cliff combine to make a scene that is delightfully picturesque. You are reminded of the beautiful seaside hamlets of Europe.

The fort was begun by the English in 1780. When completed three years later, its commanding position, its blockhouses, and its ponderous walls, surmounted by a stockade of cedar posts, made it a most formidable defence in the warfare of that day. The stockade was ten feet high and pierced by two sets of loopholes for musketry, and the blockhouses were armed with small iron cannon. For nearly fourscore years the fort retained much of its original appearance. Then a part of

the stockade fell, and the rest was removed. Otherwise, the fort today is still in most essentials what it was in the beginning, and its sturdy walls bid fair to last for centuries.

The success of the American colonies in their war for independence gave the United States peaceful possession of the fort not long after it was finished, but early in the second war with the mother country one hundred and thirty-five English soldiers and about a thousand Indians surprised and captured it without bloodshed. Two years later its recapture was attempted, and a battle was fought on the northern part of the island. The Americans were defeated with considerable loss in killed and wounded, and they withdrew. At the close of the war, however, it was once more transferred to the United States. It no longer has much military value, but it is historically significant to a rare degree and is redolent of a martial past.

All around the island steep limestone cliffs front the water, and the rugged shores might be forbidding were they not fringed with cedars and pines that grow along the beach and cling to the steeps. Most of the upland is covered with hardwood. The island is plentifully crisscrossed with roads, and a beautiful drive encircles it at the foot of the cliffs. When I began to get acquainted with its various features I concluded that the atmosphere was conducive to sentiment. Witness, for instance, such names as "Cupid's Pathway," "Lover's Leap," "Wishing Spring," and "Friendship's Altar."

Caves, grottoes, and fantastic rock formations abound. The most famous of these is "Arch Rock," a slender, graceful natural bridge of mammoth proportions. It is a part of the lofty cliffs on the east side, a hundred and fifty feet above the water. Among the other limestone grotesqueries are "Chimney Rock," "The Devil's Kitchen," and "The Sugar Loaf." The last is a honey-combed pinnacle that rises to a height of ninety feet, amid the woods, not far from Arch Rock.

There is a legend which declares that Mackinac Island was specially created by one of the Indian manitous. This god was looking around the region for a dwelling-place, but could find none suitable. So he raised Mackinac Island from the deeps of the channel, and sent his messengers all over the world to inform the spirits of the earth, air, and water that here was a place prepared for them where they could come and rest, leaving all care behind. To enable visitors to easily ascend to the heights of the island the manitou made the arched gateway. The Great Spirit's wigwam was built on the plateau near by, but during the years that have elapsed since that dim period the wigwam has turned to stone, and is now the rough yet symmetrical cone known as the "Sugar Loaf."

A much higher pinnacle is "Lover's Leap," which stands on the shore and soars up one hundred and forty-five feet. From its top an Indian maiden is said to have watched day after day for the return of her lover from a war expedition. At last, word came that he had been



*One of the fort gateways*

solitary Indian hunter will, without apparent reason, apprehend some great evil and be seized with an unearthly terror that makes him shiver from head to foot, and the hairs of his head stand up like porcupine quills. Then he knows that those wandering Ottawa spirits are near. He is benumbed with fright, and the sensation is awful; yet the spirits have never done anyone serious harm. An Indian, when he recovers from the spell, generally concludes that the visitation means that the spirits want something, and he leaves in a convenient spot a present of tobacco, powder, or other article which he thinks they may fancy. If they appear to a person and talk to him, that person is ever afterward gifted with power to foresee the future and becomes a prophet to his people.

One object of historical interest at Mackinac is a hotel that is in part the same structure that was used by John Jacob Astor in conducting his fur business. Astor migrated to America from Germany in 1784, and at first worked in a New York bakery. But presently he began in a small way to sell furs in the country towns about the city. He was industrious, prudent, and saving; and when the American Fur Company was chartered in 1809 Mr. Astor became the president and principal shareholder. Its operations at Mackinac covered a period from 1815 to 1842, and during this time the little island in the straits was the chief center of the fur company's trade and activity. Three million dollars' worth of merchandise was annually exchanged

for furs in the Indian country. But gradually those pathfinders of the wilderness, the fur-traders, were driven out by the lumbermen, who roughly prepared the region for their successors, the pioneer farmers, and by 1835 the fur business was seriously on the wane. After the winding up of the affairs of the American Fur Company, individual merchants at Mackinac continued the fur trade, but it constantly declined until it entirely disappeared from the island.

Meanwhile the fishing business had become increasingly important. Whitefish and trout in small quantities began to be sent to the Buffalo market about 1824. More and more were shipped as the years passed, and all the fishing grounds for a hundred and fifty miles around brought their catch to Mackinac to be sorted, salted and packed.

Mackinac's record as a pleasure resort dates back to 1842, when a few Southern families began to summer on the island. They brought their slaves with them and often came as early as June and stayed until November. Year after year, the vacation tourists became more numerous, and now the caring for them is the chief business of the town. The inhabitants number about eight hundred, and I was told that all but three of the families are intermarried. A peculiar result of this relationship is that while they quarrel freely among themselves, yet if any individual has a disagreement with an outsider they are all united against the latter, no matter what the merits of the case may be.

The most unsatisfactory phase of the tourist business is the shortness of the season. "Our hotels don't commence to really fill up till August," said an elderly citizen with whom I chatted as he was loitering on one of the wharves, "and the rush don't last much more than a month. If we get a cold east wind in early September our visitors think they might as well go home, though they ought to know the weather'll take a turn and give 'em a scorching where they live.

"One of our troubles is that we get such poor help. We have to apply to the employment agencies in the big cities, and they send summer resorts like this a lot of rowdies and nigger wenches who can't get work anywhere else. The help are mean. You can't depend on 'em. While boarders are few they seem satisfied, but when your house fills up, and you've got something for 'em to do, they're ready to leave you. You're in a fix then, for you can't go right out here and replace 'em. What they're here for is a good time. You take the men servants at the hotels and the drivers of the seventy or eighty rigs that are on the street in summer, they get good wages, but they don't save nothing. They want to carouse all night, and the only business that is the better for their being here is that of the saloon-keepers. The person who carries on in such a way may pass with his comrades for 'a darn good feller,' but that's only a nickname for a blame fool.

"People who've travelled this country all over say they've never seen anything prettier than this island.

Besides, the air is pure always. You don't have to swallow any coal smoke. The land is dry and high, and there are no swamps, marshes, or frog-ponds. We have a few small green frogs on the island, but I hain't heard one sing this summer. Over on the mainland there are places where they begin to sing at four in the afternoon and keep at it till midnight. I know just one spot back by a little brook where a few mosquitoes breed, but they're very scarce here. It gets hot sometimes, yet the island is surrounded with such a body of water that we get cool air if there's any breeze stirring, and our nights are always comfortable.

"I've been here sixty years. My folks came from Ireland when I was seven years old. They crossed the ocean to Canada and went on through the Great Lakes as far as Chicago. That was in the fall of 1848. Chicago wasn't much of a place then. No, it was a regular mudhole. The river there was narrow and shallow, and the vessels that put into it couldn't turn around, but had to back out down to the lake. They were mostly sailing-vessels, but there were a few small sidewheel steamers. On the business streets were quite a number of good brick buildings. The rest were small wooden structures, some of logs. One man had a little log cabin right on the bank of the river near its mouth. When the authorities wanted to improve the harbor he wouldn't sell, and they dredged right around him and left his cabin on an island. It was a low, marshy region, and there was a great deal of ague and malaria. The streets

were so muddy it was as much as the farmers could do to get through 'em with their wagons; and a half mile out from the city center took you onto prairie.

"We came here the next year on account of the cholera, which had got into Chicago. Nearly every boat that passed through the Straits had on it some dead with the disease, especially emigrant boats from the eastern end of the lakes. The islanders were too afraid of the cholera to let 'em make any burials here, but the bodies had to be buried somewhere. So the sailors would take 'em ashore in a boat and bury 'em on the lonely beaches. Round Island, just south of us, was uninhabited, and a good many were buried there.

"The buildings here were mostly of logs. We had no sawmill until twenty-five years later, but a good deal of lumber was whip-sawed. Of the thousand or more inhabitants the biggest part was Indians and half-breeds. There were only ten or twelve white families. Nothing much was grown here except on one farm in the north part of the island. That farm is still cultivated. The early owners raised a good deal of hay, but the later farmers haven't. It's too much like work—that's just the way it goes.

"Four or five small docks reached out into the water from the settlement, and there wasn't another dock between Buffalo and Chicago. The vessels all used to stop to buy supplies, and some would leave goods and take on furs and fish. The steamers loaded up with wood. Their engines didn't burn coal then, and they

couldn't have carried enough wood to make one of their long trips without so crowding the decks that there wouldn't have been the necessary room for passengers and cargo. They had to stop along to take on a fresh supply, and often were obliged to pay an exorbitant price. I've seen the decks so piled up with wood that even the windows of the staterooms were darkened. We cut considerable wood for the steamers right on the island, but most of it was brought from the other islands and the mainland. Some eight or ten scows carrying from a hundred to a hundred and fifty cords to a load were hauling it every day. They were flat-boats with sails, and they didn't draw over four feet of water, so they could go right in on the bank to load. The men went where they pleased on government land to cut the wood, and it didn't cost them anything.

"Indians were numerous in the region, and they had little villages all along the lake shores. Usually they did their hunting with flintlock guns bought from the traders, but a good many continued to use just such bows and arrows as their ancestors carried. The bows were six or seven feet long, and the arrows were stone-pointed. They raised a good deal of corn, they shot and trapped game, and they caught fish. They could ketch all the fish they wanted anywhere they went to, either by setting a net over night in the lake, or by going up the rivers and spearing 'em. The squaws did all the home work, and it was they who went out in the

woods and got a bundle of sticks, when there was need, and built a little fire to cook in the wigwam.

“The Indians came here from all around to trade. They brought furs—mostly mink, fox, and otter, with some bear and lynx skins—and they brought fish. Another thing they brought to sell was deerskin moccasins they’d made. The Indians were very expert in tanning deerhide. They wore moccasins all through the year and never would buy shoes or boots. Many of the whites wore moccasins in winter, and I’ve wore ’em myself. I’d wrap up my feet in blanket nips, pull on moccasins, and nothing could be better to walk in dry snow, or to wear if I was going somewhere in a sleigh. They were about the only thing that snowshoes would go well with, for cowhide footwear was too stiff.

“The government made a money payment here to the Indians each year in the fall, and sometimes we’d have as high as three or four thousand of ’em camped by the shore. The stores were well back from the water, and there was a strip of gravelly beach a mile long, yes, every bit of that, where they could set up their wigwams two or three deep. It wasn’t just the men that came—it was whole families, cats, dogs, and all; and the braves were in their war paint and feathers—oh, they were savage-lookin’ fellers! But they were peaceable. One white man could scare a dozen of ’em. In fact, the white men were more bother to the Indians than the Indians were to the white men.

“They brought their camp fixings right in the canoe—



*Starting for the fishing grounds*



you bet they did!—and they'd have the wigwam up in twenty minutes. The squaws attended to that while the men unloaded the boat. The framework of a wigwam was of poles set up cone-fashion, and the covering was birch-bark. Pieces of bark were stripped from the trees, and while still green were stitched together with basswood cords to make larger pieces. The cords were made of the inside bark, which can be separated into long tough strands. All the birch bark needed for a cabin could be rolled up tight and tied, and it wouldn't take up any more room than a barrel.

“Their canoes were of birch-bark, too, and they were staunch and water-tight. They melted gum from pine trees to put on the seams and any flaws, and it was just as tough as wax. The inside of the canoe was lined with cedar strips, very thin and pliable. It was wood so straight-grained it would split in strips like a ribbon ten feet long, if you chose. There are not many such cedars left, and there were not many in those times, but the Indians found them. The owner of a canoe was very careful not to drag it on a stony shore. He'd pick it up and carry it, and when not in use he'd turn it bottom up and shield it from the sun with a covering of cedar bark. The material wouldn't rot or wear out very easy, and if properly cared for a canoe might be good for twenty years. The canoes were very buoyant and I've seen 'em big enough to carry a family of eight or ten with all their household goods.

“Sometimes the Indians would be here for a week

waiting for their pay, and when it was distributed they'd get about fourteen dollars a head, big and little. Most of it was already due the merchants who'd sold 'em goods. The Indians were very honest in those times, but they're not now. They're getting a little too much white in 'em. Then, they'd come right in and pay when the government settled with 'em, and if there were any who didn't do so the merchant would send out a clerk to take the money away from 'em. They never went away with any. They'd buy provisions and pork, and they'd buy blankets. All of 'em wore those white blankets, and you couldn't hardly tell a man from a woman. The blankets were thick and good. When you got a blanket then, you got one. Indians were ready customers for beads and imitation silver breast-pieces all strung with little bells, and they'd buy lots of ear-rings and finger rings. The rings were mostly brass, but they'd buy 'em, and any other trinkets, and all at a big profit to the dealers.

"The stores didn't have to pay a license to sell liquor, and the price was three cents a glass. An Indian would buy a gallon to take home with him. Perhaps, in order to have his good time with the least delay, and not to be troubled by the whites while he was having it, he packed his goods in his canoe and went around to the back of the island. There he'd put up his wigwam and stay as long as the whiskey lasted.

"More or less Indians were coming and going at all seasons. In winter they crossed from the mainland with

dog sleighs on the ice. The dogs were black and brindle and white and every other color, but they all had short hair. They were hitched tandem, from two to four to a sleigh. The sleigh was like a toboggan, about eight feet long and fourteen inches wide, and those flat concerns would go right on top of the snow. So would the Indians with their snowshoes, but the dogs sunk in some. A strip of canvas was tacked along each side of the sledge and folded over the load, and the canvas was made fast by a crisscrossing of cords. Even if the sleigh capsized 'twouldn't make any difference, and the wrappings were so secure a man could pick it up like a log if he wanted to and carry it on his shoulder. One Indian always walked ahead, and there'd usually be one or two following behind.

“Quite a number of whites had squaw wives. You might be surprised that a white man of any sense would marry a squaw, but white women were scarce, and even the old merchants who owned a good deal of the town married squaws. The worst thing about the arrangement was that the children of such couples never amounted to much. They grew up careless, too much after the Indian way, and were not as good as either of their parents. They weren't trustworthy, and they weren't thrifty. After the father died they just lived high while the property lasted, and then had to move to humbler quarters. Take it all through, girls as well as boys, they were a worthless set.

“But a squaw made the best kind of a wife for a

fisherman. He could put her in a boat and take her off and camp, and she was at home there. She understood tending to nets and was a great help. As a rule the squaw wives were neat, and they were very good in cookin' pork, beans, corn, and fish, but they never could make good bread. Their bread was mostly always sad—they used saleratus, and the bread wasn't light. It was in the form of a cake eight or ten inches in diameter that filled the pan, and it was baked right before the fire with coals drawn out under it. When it was nearly baked they turned it over. It was heavy, but I've noticed if a feller was real hungry it tasted all right. Wunst, when three of us were out in a sailboat, a gale of wind drove us ashore, and we made a landing at an Indian village. One of the Indians had a log shanty, but he was livin' in a wigwam in the yard. A good many Indians did that way—they'd have a little log house which they'd keep nicely done up during the summer while they occupied a wigwam. This Indian give us the use of his cabin for the night and furnished us with food. They were very good that way. They were so hospitable they'd give you anything they had."

My companion now turned his steps homeward while I lingered on the wharf watching a squad of big, handsome fish that were swimming leisurely about deep down in the clear water. But after a time I, too, went up to the village. On its farther borders, half way up the slope toward the old fort, was an ancient weather-

beaten house, high in front, but slanting down at the back to a low leanto. The older portion was of logs, though these were clapboarded from sight, and this part dated back almost to the time when the fort itself was built. Behind the house was a patch of cultivated land where its thrifty German occupants raised great quantities of produce for the hotels. I got acquainted with the family and spent an evening in one of the rude, low-ceiled rooms. The head of the household was both a fisherman and a farmer, but his farming was chiefly done on the large adjacent island of Bois Blanc, a name that is locally condensed to Bobloe.

I mentioned that the house dog had threatened to nip me when I came in at the gate, and my host said: "I'll tell you the easiest way to scare a dog that don't behave himself. Take your cap in your mouth and crouch down in front of him. He don't know what to make of that, and he'll give a yell out of him, put his tail between his legs, and go. Sixty miles an hour is nothing, and he'll never stop."

My host had at one time been a deputy game warden and he related some of his experiences. "The law itself is not always reasonable," said he. "It used to be that you couldn't 'sell, barter, or give away,' fish under a certain size. Yet you will ketch under sized fish in spite of the dickens, no matter if the mesh of your net is large enough to let 'em through. You were liable to a fine if you threw 'em back in the water, and you were liable to a fine if you brought them ashore. What could

you do—send 'em away in a balloon? But a new law allows you to have ten per cent of under sized fish in your possession.

“One time there was a complaint that the fish were being speared in a certain lake over on the mainland. The lawbreakers weren't just gettin' a mess to eat, but they were doin' the spearin' for the fun of it, and would leave the fish on the shore. I went to the lake with the head warden one evening to put a stop to such recklessness. We drove there in a buggy through the woods, six miles. Then we hitched our horse, got a boat, and lay in wait near the mouth of a stream. By and by we see a jack-light and heard the sound of oars, and pretty soon we made out there were three men in the boat. We run in between 'em and the shore. They saw us and put out the light and started for the middle of the lake with us after 'em. I was rowing. We hadn't gone far when we heard a gunshot, and a bullet whistled past near my head. Then I gave 'em a shot from my pistol. If I'd had a rifle I'd have got one of 'em, for I'd have shot to kill—my gosh, yes! I was mad, and I rowed after 'em as fast as I could go. I'd have followed 'em to hell and back before I'd have let 'em escape. All the time I was gaining, but I rowed four miles before they stopped. We came along side. 'Who are you?' we said, gripping their boat.

“Not a word. 'Been fishing?'

“Not a word any more'n if they'd been deaf and dumb. They'd thrown their spear and jack-light over-

board, but I flashed our light into the bottom of their boat, and there lay a bass with the marks of five prongs on it. I reached over and picked it up. 'All right,' I says, 'that's enough. You blasted fools, if you'd thrown that bass into the water we wouldn't have had any proof—we couldn't have done nothing.'

"They wouldn't speak, they wouldn't move, and I had to tow their boat back. We'd got almost to shore before they opened their mouths and began to be kind o' decent. We could have arrested 'em and taken 'em to town; but how? We had only a buggy. That wouldn't carry all of us, and six miles was a long walk. So we said, 'We'll let you go if you'll appear at court Monday morning.'

" 'We'll be there,' they said, and we parted company.

"The game warden and I took along the fish and kept it on ice so we could produce it as evidence. Monday I went to town, and in the first saloon I come to I see those three fellows. They called me in and treated me and asked what they'd better do. Well, the game warden, he didn't want any row, he didn't like to make any enemies. An election was coming and he needed votes, and I said, 'Now, boys, the thing for you to do is to plead guilty, and we'll let you off easy.'

"We went to the court, and the game warden and I told how we'd caught 'em with that speared fish in their boat. 'Gentlemen,' says the judge, turning to the accused men, 'how is that?'

" 'Guilty,' they says, and he fined 'em eight dollars and sixty-five cents apiece.

"They paid, and the whole bunch, judge and all, went back to the saloon as sociable as you please. We could have soaked 'em for shooting, but that's a part of the game. You have to stand for that. If you are an officer and try to enforce the law, there are times when you carry your life in your hand. If anybody in this wild region has got it in for you he only needs to stand way back in the bush with his gun when you're passing in some lonely place—and if a bullet comes—well, whose was it? Why, good Lord, man! those bullets never tell—they're all alike. So there's many a game warden who never leaves town, but just hangs around. They're born cowards.

"Speaking of fishing, did you ever go ketching shiners on a moonlight night in the spring when they're running up the brooks to the ponds to spawn? They start about sundown, and go up little brooks no more than two feet wide. There are regular droves, and they ruffle the water in their hurry and leap out and fall back. It's a pretty sight. You take a bag, fit a hoop into it to keep it open, and set it near the mouth of a brook. Then you go up a short distance and return, hitting the water with a switch. If it's dark you carry a lantern. Maybe you'll get half a bushel of the shiners at one drive. They keep running up until about midnight, and then there's just as many running the other way; but those going down have spawned and are soft-fleshed. We put 'em up in mustard or olive oil to eat later.

"About ten days after those little fellers have left the

ponds the suckers start to run. They go in the night, the same as the shiners, and they fill the brook full and pile up on each other. You can hear 'em splash and skirmish. Some of 'em weigh as high as four pounds. We throw 'em out with pitchforks or with our hands. They are very nice when they come out of cold water, but are the boniest fish in the lakes. They used to be called 'Family whitefish,' after they got to Chicago. However, since the new food law has been put in force that fake business has been dropped.

"In winter we fish quite a little through the ice. That's dangerous sometimes. Last March, while a couple of Mackinac half-breeds were out on the ice at the fishing grounds about two miles from the village, a great big floe broke off with them on it. There was a fierce snowstorm at the time, and they didn't notice that they were afloat till their lines began to drag, and then the crack was too wide to jump. That was about nine o'clock in the morning. The wind carried 'em ten miles east to where they got into a current that brought 'em back eight miles toward Bobloe Island. Each had a sledge drawn by two dogs, and they made the dogs run and they ran themselves to keep from freezing. They must have gone twenty-five or thirty miles running that day. The situation was getting more alarming all the time because the floe was breaking up.

"I was on Bobloe Island at my farm, and I saw the men on the ice cake, but it would be only for a few

moments at a time. Then the storm would thicken and hide then. A rowboat couldn't go to them. The waves and the pieces of ice would have smashed it, and I could only watch. The snow froze stiff on my mustache as soon as I stepped out, and I couldn't keep my eyes open. I thought the two men were sure gone. The ice cake drifted on till it touched the shore, and then the waves began to wash across it. One of the men had kneeled down to pray, but the other told him to cut that out till they got to land. So they made a running jump to the shore, and the dogs followed with the sleighs. An instant later the ice cake drifted away into the storm. They hadn't lost anything. They even had some fish in the sleighs; but the dogs were so played out they dropped right down; and I tell you the men done some eating when they got to my house, and don't you forget it.

"There's others besides fishermen have adventures on the ice. The people on Mackinac get a good deal of wood from Round Island in the winter. Late one afternoon a man started from there with his load. A storm had begun, and it soon got so dark he couldn't see his hand before his eyes. If he'd let his horse go he'd been all right, but he thought it hadn't taken the proper direction, and he pulled it out of the track. Hour after hour he kept on without getting anywhere, and he gradually threw off wood from his sled to lighten up till there was none left. He was travelling all night and in the morning found he'd been circling Round Island,

following his own tracks. His feet, hands and kneecaps were frozen. Oh! you want to get a move on if you're out on the ice and see a storm threatening.

"In the spring when the ice begins to soften there's danger of breaking through, and the woodteams each carry a rope with a slipnoose at one end so if the horse gets in they can put the rope around his neck and pull him out. We get in ourselves once in a while, too. I fell through up to my neck once, but I soon got out. Then I pulled off the big rubber boots I had on and emptied out the water, all except a little, and started on a dog trot for home. My stockings would have frozen stiff if I hadn't left any water in the boots to keep working around. When I reached home and got into dry clothes I was fine as a chipmunk.

"But such things are nothing—they happen every winter. We all take chances, and the people here will do whatever they can to help a person in danger, even to risking their own lives. We feel more responsibility for each other, I suppose, because we are so isolated. It's not just danger that will stir us to help, but we'll all club together to make comfortable anybody who's suffering from poverty. Oh, Mackinac isn't simply a good place for outsiders to spend the summer—it's a good place to live all the year."

NOTE.—Of all the Great Lakes resorts I think the Straits of Mackinac have the finest combination of scenic, historic and climatic attraction. Mackinac Island, with its tiny harbor, quaint village and old fort, and its castellated rocks that front the water, is

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a gem. Besides the stirring story of its past there is a great variety of legendary lore that appeals to the imagination and increases the sojourner's enjoyment. Fishing and sailing can be had here at their best. For a little while in midsummer the island is crowded, and those who desire to visit it with most comfort would do well to select some other month than August. Accommodations vary from the sumptuous and expensive in the fine hotels to the simplicity and moderate charges of the boarding-houses.

All visitors will be interested to recall that on the mainland, at Mackinaw City, occurred one of the most dismal of Indian massacres. This is fascinatingly described in Parkman's "The Conspiracy of Pontiac."

It is also of interest to know that a representation of the story of Hiawatha, which is a narrative of the Ojibways, is given each year by these Indians near Petosky on the shore of Lake Michigan about forty miles south of the Straits of Mackinac. Here on a wooded point are the tepees of an Indian village, and on the margin of a landlocked bay with the forest for a background the scenes of the play are enacted on nature's own stage. The spot is in the very heart of the Ojibway country, and from a remote past these Indians have hunted and fished and fought in this vicinity, and they are proud of their early legends which the poet has woven into verse. It is said that they render the play with great skill and charm. The play is given on every pleasant day through the month of August.

Some of the most attractive of Lake Michigan's resorts are in this vicinity on Grand Traverse Bay and Little Traverse Bay.

Out in the lake to the north is Beaver Island which is worth visiting because of its fame as the one-time stronghold of King Strang and his Mormons. It is an island where piracy once flourished with the result that more than one vessel met a mysterious and tragic end at the hands of buccaneers as bloodthirsty as any that ever roamed the South Seas. As one of the Mackinac residents expressed it, "They had all sorts of rows and rumpuses there, fighting and shooting, and were responsible for more deaths than a war would take, you might say."





*Entering the "Soo" Canal*

## IX

### ROUNDAABOUT THE "SOO"

**I**N the narrow river that connects Lakes Superior and Huron is a ledge of rocks half a mile long, over which the waters run in swift violence forming the Rapids of St. Mary, or, to put it in French, the Sault Sainte Marie. The adjacent banks were a gathering-place for the Indians from time immemorial. Here they fished in the rapids and portaged their canoes along the shores. The importance of the spot increased when the white men came, for there was an immediate increase of traffic. As time went on, more and more furs had to be portaged down, and more and more trappers' and traders' supplies went up from below. But the boats that were used, whether by Indians or pioneer whites, were comparatively small and light. Indeed, for more than two centuries after the whites began to explore the Great Lakes, most of the navigation was in frail birch-bark canoes, or flat-bottomed, sharp-pointed row-boats called bateaux. Only in the most favorable weather were sails used on these craft, and they seldom ventured far from the shores of the stormy, wind-swept waters. Larger vessels were rare even down to the beginning of the nineteenth century, at which time the

entire fleet of Huron, Erie, and Michigan consisted of three schooners and six sloops.

The steamboat made its appearance on the lakes in 1818, when a side-wheeler called the *Walk-in-the-Water* was launched at Buffalo. She had unboxed wheels, and six lengths of stovepipe put together served for a smoke-stack. For several years she plied back and forth between Buffalo and Detroit. The trip often took thirteen days, and the fare was eighteen dollars. In 1832 the first steamboat reached Chicago, and in the years that followed the number of steamboats increased rapidly. They could move freely through all the lakes above Niagara except Superior, and presently, in order to give access to the rich regions bordering this lake, the "Soo" Canal was constructed.

It was at first agreed that a lock two hundred and fifty feet long would provide amply for any vessels that would ever navigate those waters, for the longest boat on the lakes then measured only one hundred and sixty-seven feet. But through the urgency of Mr. Harvey, who had charge of the work, another hundred feet was added to the lock length. The undertaking was a tremendous one for those days, without railroad connection with the rest of the world and with a very slow steamboat service. It took six weeks to get a reply to a letter mailed to New York, where gangs of laborers had to be hired among the immigrants. At one time an epidemic of cholera killed ten per cent. of the men, but work went on without interruption. At another time

two thousand laborers struck, and Harvey hid all the provisions in the woods until the strikers returned, which they did in twenty-four hours. The canal was completed in 1855.

Fifteen years later the lock was enlarged, and in 1896 an eight hundred foot lock was built, the biggest and costliest lock in the world. Even this is now too small, and a still larger one is nearing completion. During the season an average of a boat every twelve minutes day and night passes through the locks, and the total annual tonnage is about ten times that of the Suez Canal.

The changes in the locks correspond with the changes in the size and type of the lake vessels. In recent years the most omnipresent of these vessels are the steel steamboats built solely to carry as much cargo as is consistent with safety. Five or six hundred feet is a common length. At the stern is the machinery with a smoke-stack and a row of cabins visible above the deck. At the front end, the length of a city block distant, is the deck-house, containing officers' quarters, with the wheelhouse and bridge. The whole shell is built with special regard to strength, and the improvements in the vessels have greatly lessened the number of wrecks. Formerly the frequency of marine tragedies on the inland seas was appalling, and if all the ships lost on them were evenly distributed on the thousand mile route between Buffalo and Duluth there would be a sunken hulk every half mile. Now, however, such is the comparative rarity of wrecks that, as far as pas-

senger traffic is concerned, no other travel thoroughfares can rival these lakes for safety. In 1907, for instance, of the sixteen million persons who journeyed on the lake passenger ships only three were lost. The risk on our railroads is vastly more serious, and even the percentage of ocean casualties is twelve times as great.

But wrecks of freighters are still common, and probably no similar area of ocean bottom could show more sunken ships or more valuable cargoes than the depths of the Great Lakes. The closing days of the season's navigation are the most perilous. This is a time justly dreaded for its storms and cold, its heavy fogs, or blizzards of snow. Yet an additional trip means the earning of exceptionally high freight rates, and a profit of thousands of dollars. So many a boat assumes the risk. The start is perhaps made under a clear sky, with gentle breezes and mild temperature, but in a few hours the air may turn bitterly cold, a fierce gale blow and the vessel be buffeted by a blinding snowstorm and by waves whose spray coats the ship with ice. The lights along the shores are hidden from view, and the safety of the vessel depends on the accuracy of the captain's calculations and his good seamanship. If he misjudges, instead of being on her proper course miles from the coast, the ship may be steadily driving toward her doom.

Fully one sixth of the vessels that meet disaster are total wrecks, and sometimes not a soul has survived of

those that were on board. These land-locked waters even have their "mysterious disappearances." Ships sailing from one port to another, though perhaps their natural course would at no time be more than thirty miles from shore, have never been heard from again. One of the more recent of such mysteries is that of the *Bannockburn*. She was a powerful freighter with a crew of twenty-two men. One morning she left Duluth and was sighted the next evening. That was the last ever seen of her. Eighteen months later, in the drift-wood at the edge of the Michigan wilderness an oar was found on which the letters of the name *Bannockburn* were rudely scraped into the wood. This is the sole relic of the missing freighter; but some superstitious sailors affirm that she still exists and that on stormy autumn nights they have seen her—a ghostly apparition shrouded in ice, scudding through the gloom.

My first visit to the "Soo" was in October, and on the morning after my arrival I looked forth from my hotel which fronted on the canal, off across the white turmoil of the Rapids to the wooded Canadian hills blushing with autumn color. The weather had hitherto been mild, but winter seemed to have arrived during the night, and a wild blast swept down the river, even dashing the waters of the canal into big white-capped waves. When I stepped outside for a moment the wind snatched my breath away and nearly took me off my feet. No doubt, on the open lakes, the rude weather had caused a good many vessels to seek shelter, but

every now and then one would appear at the locks, pass through and go on.

Among the loiterers in the hotel office was a ponderous German with so pronounced a double chin that his face was twice as long as nature intended it to be. He was a deep-voiced man, with a profundity of manner that indicated he had pondered much and settled definitely as to the right and wrong of most questions. He was not a resident at the "Soo," but had been a frequent visitor there during the last twenty-five years. "I remember the first time I came," said he. "It was winter. I got up in the morning, and somebody said it was nineteen below zero. I didn't believe it, but, by cracky! it was. There was no wind, and the cold is nothing here if the wind don't blow. You can walk around without your overcoat no matter how the thermometer stands. That first time it was all right; but other times it's snowed and it's blowed. The wind goes right through you, and I've seen six and a half feet of snow already on the street here. Yes, you can have this country—I don't want it. But it's nice enough in summer, and if you drive out of the town you can see some prosperous farms—and you can see some that are not prosperous. The Germans are good farmers. So are the Dutch and the Scotch; but the rest—no. There's the Yankees, for instance. They talk and brag about what they can do on the farm, but I never saw one yet who was a good farmer. I think they're born a little tired. Their strong hold is scheming, buying, and





*In the business center*

selling. The Irish are worse still. They ain't brought up to farm in a business-like way over in the old country, and they ain't used to farm machinery and don't take care of it. The French are only good at hunting and trapping. Then there's the half-breeds. When one of them comes into possession of a farm he wastes no time in selling it cheap to get it off his hands.

"I'd guarantee it was awful rough out on the lakes today, but the storm wont scare the captains of the freighters any. It'll be more likely to make 'em swear than to frighten 'em into praying. But no one will do any pleasure sailing. I'm sure I wouldn't want to go down the Rapids. You know the Chippewa Indians take people down in their canoes for the sake of furnishing 'em some excitement and novelty. I made the trip the first time that I was here in summer. A man and his wife had intended to go down at the same time, but the man was so afraid he'd get upsot that he backed out. He said he wouldn't make such a trip for a thousand dollars, and I says, 'The wife is the best man of the two.'

"It looked dangerous, but I thought if she could go down I was blame sure I could. Besides, I'd made up my mind to go, and when I've made my mind up that settles it. I'm goin' anyway. You can't stop me. Well, the woman jumped into the canoe along side of me, and we started. There was an Indian at the bow and one at the stern to guide the boat, and we went at about the rate of forty-five miles an hour. As the feller

says, 'You can't drink twice while you're goin' down.' We dashed along on the foaming waves thinkin' at times we was about to land right on top of some of the rocks, but we always slid one side or the other. Those Indians understood their business. It was very skilful steering, and at the end of the trip I felt I'd had my money's worth. It cost me half a dollar.

"I've never wanted to shoot the rapids again. I ain't like a friend of mine I met at a fair one time. 'Come into this tent,' he says. 'They've got the best show in here I ever saw in my life.'

"So I went in with him, and we saw a man double himself backwards and get through a hoop. When we came out, my friend says, 'Let's go in again.'

" 'No,' I says. 'I've been in once and that's enough.'

"But he went in six times just like a little boy. I says, 'You're a nice one to spend sixty cents to see a fellow go through a hoop.' He was from Pennsylvania."

The town at the "Soo" is a place of considerable size with electric cars, and many substantial buildings both public and private. But I was less interested in the evidences of its being progressive and up-to-date than in some survivals of a more primitive period. Thus, on Sunday, I attended the morning service at a certain little wooden church, chiefly because the religion of its adherents was typical of what had wide acceptance in the earlier days of the region. The church interior was plain almost to barrenness. There was no

musical instrument, chairs served for seats, and a stove supplied heat. Only twenty persons were present, but the weather was threatening, and very likely this had adversely affected the size of the congregation. The preacher was youthful, intelligent and forceful. An oddity in his apparel was the absence of a necktie, but whether this was chance or had some spiritual significance, I cannot say. His flock was earnest and attentive, joined heartily in the singing, and when he called on Sister So-and-So or Brother This-and-That to lead in prayer, the person called on at once rose and began, while the rest of us kneeled with our elbows on our chairs. At frequent intervals the persons kneeling, and more especially the preacher, voiced their approbation by such exclamations as "Amen!" and "Yes, Lord!"

The sermon was in the main a torrent of loud-voiced exhortation. It was extemporaneous, and the preacher stood by his desk with a small Bible in his hand open at the text. Among other things he told how his folks left the "Soo" while he was quite youthful to make their home "twelve miles out in the wilderness. I thought it was a great hardship," said he, "to leave all the advantages of the town and move into that rough, lonely country, where I used to hear the wildcats and other animals howling at night. But here I was going fast for a young boy. I was going to the bad, and if I'd kept on I'd been in my grave by this time. They had religious meetings in the old log schoolhouse in the

vicinity where we'd moved, and it was there the Lord spoke to me. After I was saved I said, 'I'm glad I ever came to this place.' But though I was converted at the old log schoolhouse, I must not omit to speak of my grandfather's influence. Every little while he'd wend his way from the house up a secluded path into the woods to pray, and I attribute my salvation to the fact that I had a praying grandfather. Praise the Lord for evermore!"

After the sermon he announced that everybody was free to sing, pray, or testify. Nearly all the adults responded in turn, most of them with a testimony delivered in a mechanical monotone, and the minister sitting by the pulpit encouraged the speakers with such phrases as "Bless the Lord," "That's true," "Help us Lord," "Let Thy spirit come more and more."

The testimonies were characterized by a sort of abject emotionalism that did not seem to me at all edifying, and the most human person present was a small boy who put in his time playing with a wasp that clung to a bit of string. Some of the women were quite overcome by the recollection of the experiences they related and made frequent use of their handkerchiefs to wipe away tears and to blow their noses. Their testimonies ran somewhat in this wise:

"I thank the Lord this morning that I am saved and sanctified. I'm thankful for all He's done for me, and that I'm not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. I feel this morning that I belong to the Lord and He is mine.

I've always felt someway or other that He had His hand on me, since I was a child. But there was a time in my life—a few weeks before I was saved—that I was terribly afraid I was one of the lost. I thought of Paul, the persecutor of the Christians. He was converted and turned right about face as it were, and why shouldn't I? After a while the light of the Lord shone on my heart, and I got the witness of the spirit that I was forgiven. Yet it was an awful cross to go to the preacher and tell him I was saved. It didn't seem as if I could do it. But now I'm on my way to heaven. It's a great mercy to belong to this church and live in this place, and I expect to stand in my post of duty to the end. I hope to meet you all about the great white throne."

As the woman, tremulous and tearful, sank into her seat there was a chorus of "Amens," and the preacher exclaimed, "Oh glory to God for His wonderful salvation!"

Before I left the "Soo" I obtained some lively reminiscences of the past of the region from an enthusiastic long-time resident. "I came here," said he, "right on the heels of the Civil War in the autumn of '64. I hadn't expected to locate permanently in this wild new country, but at first I was too poor to leave. Then I bought a piece of land, and when I would have liked to go elsewhere I couldn't sell it for any reasonable price, and I wouldn't give it away. So I stayed. There were about four hundred and fifty inhabitants in the village when I came. Hardly more than one in ten were whites.

The rest were French half-breeds and Indians. Log houses were common, but there were beginning to be sawmills in the region, and people were putting up more and more frame buildings. There was a Catholic church here, and had been for two hundred years, I suppose. A Protestant church was constructed when the canal was begun.

"I taught the village school, and in addition to that I preached on Sundays, and I had to farm a little besides in order to keep my family from starving to death. Flour was twelve dollars a barrel, tea two dollars a pound, and a dollar would only buy four pounds of granulated sugar. But we could always buy fish cheap of the Indians, who went out into the rapids with their canoes and caught them in scoop nets. All we had to do was to go to the waterside and pay fifteen cents for the finest whitefish anybody ever tasted. Now you have to pay three or four times that for a fish of decidedly poorer quality. The deterioration is due to the fact that the water is less pure than it used to be. It is befouled by the ashes that the steamers dump up above. At present the Indians only fish for a short time when navigation opens. Formerly they were at it from early spring till late in the fall. You'd see an Indian in the bow of the canoe with a paddle, and one in the stern with a pole. They'd go out to some eddy below a large boulder, and the man behind would hold the boat steady while the other handled the scoop net. The net often brought up half a dozen fish at a time out

of the eddy. In a little while the men would return to the shore with a basket full. Oh, my dear sir, we had fish and potatoes—the best in the world—without limit.

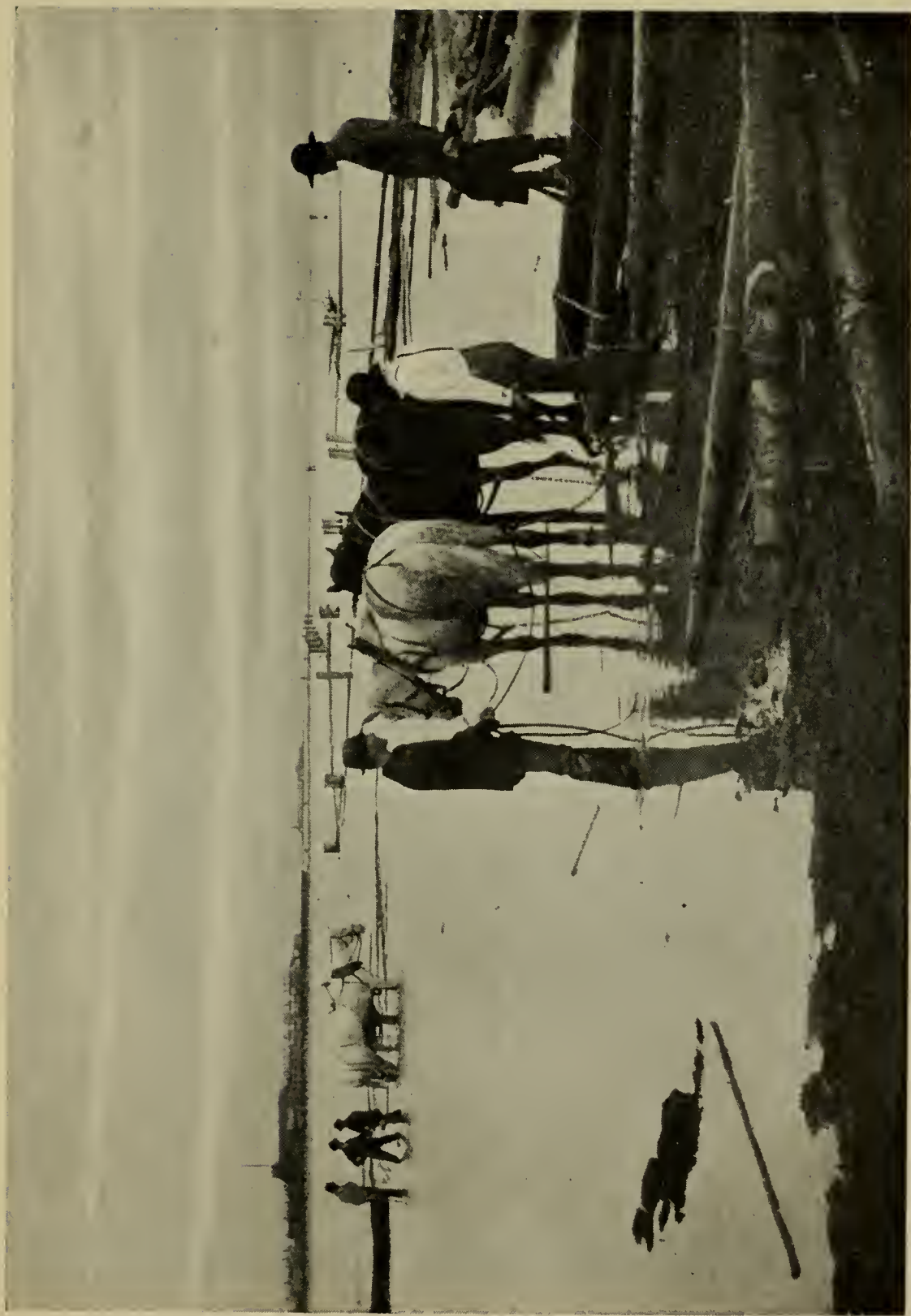
"I had nearly a hundred boys and girls in my school from five to twenty years of age, and at first I was the only teacher. I taught all subjects including Latin, algebra, physics, and bookkeeping. The building was fairly good, but inside there was a rough pine floor, and a mongrel sort of seats, ten or twelve feet long, made by some local carpenter. Half a dozen or more pupils sat in each seat—I could have a whole class in one—and you can imagine how difficult it was to keep order.

"The railroad didn't get here until 1887, and we were pretty effectually isolated from the world in winter. We were careful to get in the fall what supplies we needed from the outside. When the last boat went away about the beginning of December we didn't expect to get any response to the letters we sent for a month. The winter mail had to come from Thunder Bay by dog-train. From two to four dogs were hitched tandem to a toboggan-like sled in charge of two Indian runners on snowshoes. The trip was subject to various accidents and delays, and we never knew exactly when they would return. In their initial trip perhaps they'd have to camp on the shore of the Straits of Mackinac two or three weeks waiting for the channel to freeze over so they could cross, and meanwhile they'd live on rabbits.

“When we caught sight of them coming back there was a great commotion here at the ‘Soo.’ Everybody who could hurried with much noise and cheering to meet the runners and escorted them into town, and wanted to know about their trip and all the news before the mail was opened.

“I made the trip once myself. Besides the mail, we had on our trainneau blankets and a little camp equipage and grub. One went ahead, and if he was taking a new trail he’d blaze the trees along so he’d know where he was if he came that way again. The other followed behind holding a rope attached to the trainneau to steer it and restrain it going down hill. Often we’d make forty miles in a day, and it was a hard trip. We wasted very little breath talking to each other, for ours was a lightning express, and we bent all our energies to making speed. Our pace was a sort of a dog trot much of the way. We’d go along making two short steps and then a long one which would be made alternately by the right and the left foot. After a person got accustomed to the gait it was about as easy as an ordinary walk. I doubt if there’s any demand for that sort of thing on the continent of America now. Our vigorous speed naturally made us thirsty, yet we didn’t dare to quench our thirst by eating snow—that would create colic. We waited till we got to running water.

“When night came we’d stop in some forest dell, near a brook or spring, if possible. The dogs were always so tired they were willing to lie down, but we had work to



*Hauling off stranded logs*



do. We'd gather some dry wood and start a fire the first thing, and suspend over it a kettle of water to heat. The kettle was hung at the end of a pole which was propped up at a convenient slant. With the ax we carried we'd cut evergreen brush, preparatory to building a little shelter, and at the spot where we proposed to put it we'd scrape away the snow. Here two crotched sticks were set up a short distance apart, a pole laid across, and the boughs slanted down from that so the open front was toward the fire. The course of the wind had been previously observed, and the shed was so placed that the smoke blew away from it.

"While one of us cooked the supper the other took his gun or revolver and went to see if he could scare up a rabbit or partridge. We carried a frying-pan and a teapot, and we had a supply of cornmeal, ham, bacon, sugar, tea, and hardtack. Tea was a great staple for a forest journey. You could live on it almost. The cornmeal was our dogs' food. We made a mush of it, saved some for ourselves, if we wanted any, and the rest we poured on the snow to cool for the dogs. They were so famished they'd eat it almost boiling hot. We only fed them once a day. The supper had to do them for twenty-four hours, except that we might throw them a very little at noon. They were useless to work if fed freely. It made them sick. If we got a rabbit we'd skin it, fry a little for ourselves and give the dogs the rest. Afterward, they'd generally hunt up the skin and eat that, too.

“On the same principle that we fed the dogs, an Indian, before he started off to hunt would eat nothing. If he had a full stomach he couldn’t stand it to run. After the hunt was over he’d have a big feast. Oxen, too, that were being worked in the woods were fed very little in the morning, but given all they wanted at the end of the day, and they’d just fill themselves up and feed nearly all night.

“It was plain fare we had for supper in our forest camp—without any jams and jellies, or any pies, puddings or other after-dinner desserts. No, sir, if we got a good sandwich and a cup of tea we were happy. The next thing we wanted to do was to roll up in our blankets and say our prayers. We had to be very careful or the dogs would make way with our food in the night while we were asleep. So we’d put it right in the shelter and perhaps throw the mailbag on top and make a pillow of it. There were wolves in the woods—in fact they are all over here now—but they didn’t disturb us, and though we heard them they were too smart to let us see them. Sometimes the thermometer went a good many degrees below zero, yet it didn’t make any difference how cold the weather was to the world, it wasn’t cold there in the woods. Nobody ever slept so sweetly in a Fifth Avenue palace as we did in our camp in God’s open air, and morning came all too soon.”

A part of the time that I was in the vicinity of the “Soo” I spent at Brimley, a place of a thousand inhabitants a few miles west. A large and substantial new

school building was conspicuous in the town, and there was a good-sized Catholic church, and a creditable hotel and general store. But nearly all the other structures were quite diminutive. The Congregational and Methodist churches were so tiny they looked like playthings, and the dwellings were mostly one-story affairs that often were of logs. Few of the log structures had more than two rooms within their walls, but usually there was a makeshift kitchen at the rear in the form of a leanto.

The place is on the shore of a bay that reaches inland from Lake Superior, and when I heard that there was an Indian village off across this arm of water I was eager to visit it. I took the usual way thither, which was by a two and a half mile trestle built by a lumber company. Only a short section on the Brimley shore was still used for lumbering purposes. This section had a footpath of boards between the tracks, but beyond I had to step along on the sleepers, and these were much decayed and some of them broken. A brisk breeze blew, and the scurrying waves a few feet below had a tendency to make me feel dizzy. The previous autumn an Indian fell off and was drowned. He was alone, and it was not definitely known what had become of him until his body was found the next spring.

On the far shore of the bay was formerly a big saw-mill and a populous village. Most of the buildings were still there pleasantly embowered in a wildwood grove, but the loneliness and silence of the place were rather

gruesome. A mile farther on I came out of the woods on to a waste of sand swept by the winds from the lake, and here was an Indian hamlet of two hundred inhabitants. The houses set well back from the shore and straggled along for a considerable distance. Many were wholly exposed, but others peeped out from the borders of the brushy woodland into which the sand gradually merged. Some were of logs, and others were ugly shacks covered with tarred paper. Occasionally a house was whitewashed and tidy, yet its premises were pretty sure to be strewn with broken furniture, papers, rusty tin cans and similar refuse. The only really good buildings were the church, schoolhouse, and teacher's dwelling, and for these the whites were responsible.

A rural free delivery route includes the village, and each house had its metal letter box with the owner's name painted on it. These names were often Scotch or French, showing that men of those races had at some time married squaws of the tribe. Indeed, there were villagers who in complexion, dress and speech scarcely betrayed a trace of Indian. However, black, straight hair, olive-tinted skin and slightly oblique eyes were predominant. On one of the knolls was a burial plot fenced in with barbed wire, but the fence was partially broken down and three horses were browsing among the graves. Several evergreen trees grew in the briary neglected inclosure, and around some of the family plots of graves was a rickety picket fence. Many of the single graves were protected by a low box-like board covering with a

hipped top to shed the rain. Some of the boxes were ruinous, and I could see inside that birch bark was laid on the ground to further protect the grave from the weather. A few graves had marble headstones, and the name was likely to be followed by a funereal verse or rhyme such as the following on the headstone of a chief:

"A faithful friend, a husband dear,  
A tender parent lieth here."

Some graves had a slight board set up instead of a headstone. Often pebbles were laid around the border, and perhaps a cross or other decorative figure of stones was in the center.

Four horses and three cows were owned in the hamlet. They did not look as if they got very good care. Their proprietors cut a little grass for them in the low hollows, stacked it and fenced in the stacks. This hay is not sufficient feed for the winter, and whatever more is needed is bought from the whites. Wells were scarce, and a single one frequently served several families, so some had to walk quite a distance to a well. The wells were only a few feet deep, with sides boxed in, and a cover put on top of the curb. A stick with the elbow of a branch left on at the butt was used to let pails down and pull them up. Usually a small potato patch adjoined a home, but one could hardly expect a prolific yield in that sandy soil without fertilizer or rotation. The vines were small and frost-blackened. I saw no

other crop, though one of the Indians said they raised turnips.

It was curious, the contrast afforded by the first white man's place I came to when I went beyond the Indian domains. The man was evidently poor, yet here was comparative opulence—ploughed fields, big stacks of fodder, sturdy horses, and sleek cattle.

After I returned to Brimley I fell in with a man who had a very thorough acquaintance with the habits of the local Indians, and we had a long chat about them. "They could have steady work if they wanted it," said he, "but they don't. Six days is the work limit for an Indian. Then he's got to have eighteen days' rest. However, I'm not saying that the white men are perfect when it comes to working. I had some carpentering done last summer, and there was one man I wanted to discharge. You could hear his mouth going clickety-clack all the time. He was no earthly good. But he belonged to the union, and if I'd turned him off I'd have brought everything to a stop.

"It don't cost an Indian much to live. He can get his own fish and venison, and if he buys a little sack of flour and a chunk of pork once in a while he's all right. An Indian who's got enough for breakfast don't worry till it's time for dinner. He has no energy, no ambition. A big strong man will lie around on a sunny slope all day. It's a kind of care-free, improvident animal contentment that you don't often find in white men. Nobody lets 'em have goods on trust. I don't think they

intend to cheat you, but they're too irresponsible. If one of 'em owes you, and you go to him when he has money he'll pay, but if you don't get hold of him soon after he's received the money it'll be spent.

"They don't often have wood enough ahead so but that they have to chop some to make a fire when they get up in the morning. To haul the wood, dogs are used hitched to a sled about three feet wide, six long and eight inches high. Its runners are made of maple or birch saplings, shaved thin and bent to the proper shape. Those unshod runners slip along nice in dry frosty weather. When the dogs return with a load the man is perhaps on ahead with a rope over his shoulder helping pull. They follow little winding paths through the woods, and sometimes contrive to drag back to the door a good-sized log, which will last quite a while and can be hacked at as often as there is need of replenishing the fire.

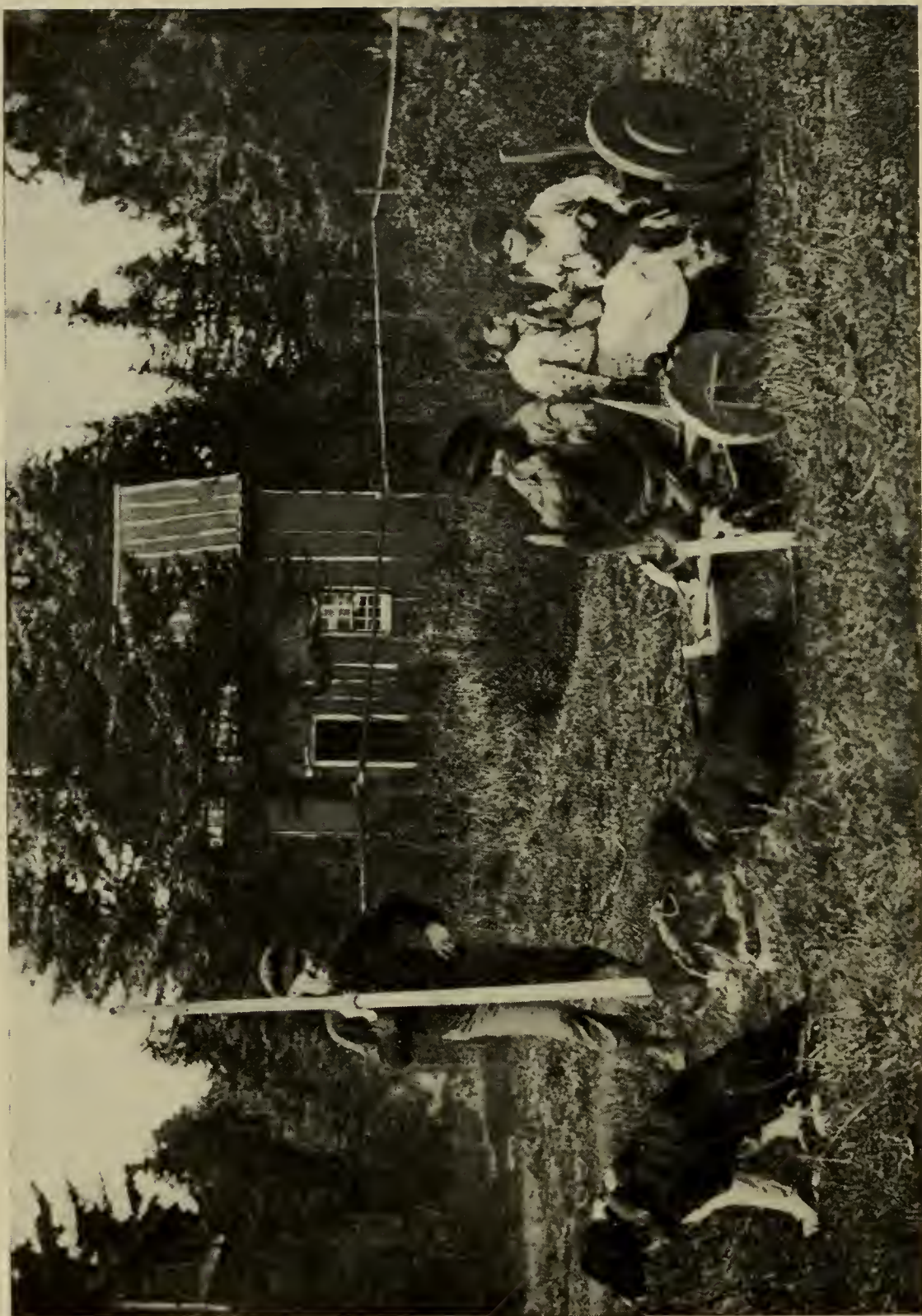
"The Indians are great hands to trap rabbits. In the winter the rabbits have regular paths in the thick underbrush, and the Indians set snares in those rabbit runs. The snare consists of a noose of copper wire fastened to a twig bent over the path. When a rabbit gets into the noose the twig flies up and there he is hung. The Indians shoot a good many rabbits, but they mostly depend on snares because they don't often have the money to buy guns and ammunition.

"In the huckleberry season they like to go off on the plains and camp there—a little village of them picking

berries. A good picker can make three or four dollars a day. But it's the squaws that do the picking while the men watch the tent and do what little cooking is necessary. The squaws are apt to be very good workers, and are often quite neat and handy. Some of 'em are as clean people as I ever saw. But their houses are dark and full of tobacco smoke, and the men are not at all particular where they spit. Nevertheless, the squaws are great on the scrub, and they take sand and water and rub their floors till they wear them out. Soap isn't used much—it's too expensive. The squaws make mittens and moccasins out of deerskin, and they make mats out of grass, and do beadwork, and weave baskets with willow twigs or ash bark. They go out in the woods, chop down an ash tree, and pound off the bark, which separates into stringy strands very good for basket-making. Some of the articles they sell to the stores, and others they peddle from house to house and get money for 'em, or exchange 'em for old clothes. They're always in need of clothes, and every year I give a suit of mine to the old chief, William Wyoski, or Bill Whiskey as we call him for short.

“Lots of those Indians have had a dandy education and can write as nice a hand as you'd want to see. As soon as they're out of school they return to the old ways of living, and it's doubtful if they've made a particle of progress in the last quarter of a century. They are inordinately fond of liquor, and I believe drink as much as ever. In some towns they can go into the saloons





*The dog team*

and buy it themselves, in other towns they have to get someone else to do the buying for them. Both men and women drink, but it's usually only the men who take enough to get drunk. They always have liquor at their dances, and as a consequence sometimes get to fighting and stab each other with jack-knives. One of 'em, after a New Year's dance, had twenty-eight knife-cuts in his back, but he got well. That sounds as if they were pretty desperate characters when under the influence of liquor, yet the whites don't find a drunken Indian dangerous. He's just maudlin and foolish and excessively polite. If one of 'em dies in a drunk, the rest of the tribe never acknowledge the real cause of the death, but attribute it to 'heart failure.'

"When they want to have a dance they pick out the house that has the best floor. A quadrille they learned from the French is one of their favorite dances, because they can swing each other dizzy in it. The cutting-out jig is another favorite. A man and a woman begin the dance, and pretty soon a woman from among the bystanders elbows out the one dancing and takes her place. Then a man elbows out the man dancer, and they keep on cutting each other out until the music stops. The dancing continues all night.

"They're pretty good about going to church, and they get quite excited at camp-meeting and shout and cry in testifying as to their religious experiences. But we have whites who carry on in the same way. We used to have a woman in this village who was what we call a Shouting

Methodist. Every morning, summer and winter alike, at seven o'clock or thereabouts, she'd raise her window and make a long prayer that was full of crying and yelling. My, how she did whoop it up! I never heard such a racket.

"At Garden River there's a Catholic Indian Mission, with a beautiful grove around the church, and each year the Indians perform a sort of pilgrimage through the grove, shooting off guns, and stopping to pray at certain stations where a little rustic altar had been set up. They have a big time.

"The superstitions and primitive methods of their ancestors still have a strong hold on them, and in case of sickness they're very apt to forget their education and religion and go to some native witch doctor. If the witch doctor will dance and shout around 'em they think they're goin' to be benefited. Our white doctors never know whether their orders will be obeyed by an Indian or not. One of 'em gave a squaw some medicine to take and told her to stay in bed. The next day he found her out in the snow splitting wood, and she hadn't touched the medicine. She told him she had some the same color before and it did her no good.

"One of the great days in the year for our Indians is Fourth of July. There's fireworks and a parade at the 'Soo,' and they all hustle and do some work beforehand so as to earn a little money for the occasion. The whole tribe digs out on that day, and each person manages to have the price of the railroad fare back and forth.

"A while ago the government made a payment to the Indians—twenty-one dollars and sixteen cents apiece. Gosh! You ought to have seen the excitement. Everyone had to come—squaws, kids and all, because the officials would only pay those that showed up. Some had to come so far that the railroad got practically all of the money for fare. One man whose name by chance wasn't on the records spent a good part of a year chasing around to get his pay. Whether they had little or much left, it was soon gone, but they made things jingle for a while. They'd come in to the Brimley hotel to buy their meals, and a flock of 'em were on every train that went to or came from the 'Soo.' They're very fond of trinkets and showy things, and they got pretty well blossomed out with cheap jewelry. Have you noticed how they dress? The old squaws wear black, but the young girls try to follow the styles and to have the latest things in hats, even if the materials are so poor that the first time the wearers are caught out in the rain the colors of the feathers and ribbons run and the hats are all bedraggled. Red and purple are their favorite tints.

"When it comes to spending money they're all pretty freakish. They're great consumers of canned goods, but are more apt to buy canned peaches and the like of that than more substantial and less expensive things. At one time a Canadian tribe received a considerable sum from their government, and a good many invested in pianos. It was funny to find a piano in a little log

cabin, and they couldn't play—they could only drum on the instruments.

“You see, with all the years they've been in contact with the whites, they don't lose their natural wildness, and I don't know as they ever will.”

NOTE.—The great attraction to the traveller who visits the “Soo” is the locks. These with the monster freighters constantly passing through furnish a most interesting spectacle. Close at hand are the foaming rapids, and there is a chance for excitement by taking a ride down them in a canoe manned by local Indians. Probably most of us feel a marked curiosity about the Indians, those wilderness dwellers who once had the entire continent to themselves, and doubtless some visitors at the “Soo” would be glad to spend a day going to see the Indians at home. Their village near Brimley is comparatively accessible and is fairly representative of how they live after they abandon their wigwams and adopt in a primitive sort of way the habits of the whites.

## X

### THE REGION OF THE PICTURED ROCKS

**T**HE Pictured Rocks extend for about ten miles along the southern coast of Lake Superior east of Munising. They are cliffs carved by the waves into many grottoes and pillars and fantastic forms, and the rocks are stained with color so that at a little distance an imaginative person can fancy many curious pictures on the face of the cliffs. They are particularly charming on a clear day when there is a play of sunshine reflected on them from the waves.

The main line of railroad does not touch the lake shore in that vicinity, and I got off the train one evening at a little town about three miles inland from Munising. It was stormy, and men in rubber coats were bustling about getting passengers for the Munising stage, piling baggage and people into the vehicle, and buttoning curtains snugly around. The prospect of a wet muddy drive through the night did not attract me, and I liked the look of a light not far away across the tracks, shining from the open door of a building that I was told was a hotel. Thither I turned my steps. The hotel was a small, rude, two-story structure in charge of a fat, elderly Irishwoman, who showed me to a room. This room had no lock on the door, but she said I would not

be disturbed, though I might hear some of "the boys," as she called the young railroad employees who were her boarders, coming in late at night from a dance. When morning arrived I discovered that in common with the other lodgers I was expected to wash my hands and face in the office where there was a basin on a stand, underneath which was a pail for dirty water. I had the choice of three towels, but so many of the boarders had used them before I took my turn it was difficult to find a space on any of them that was either dry or clean.

The chief topic of conversation at the breakfast table was an episode of the previous day. A drunken man had shot a duck that belonged to a villager. He brought it to the hotel and wanted the landlady to cook it for him. She would have done so, but the duck was too small and lacking in flesh. Then the man went his way, and a constable nabbed him and locked him up, which all agreed was a shame—"a poor fellow who was drunk and didn't know what he was about, and had only killed one little duck anyway."

The man who sat next to me was a teamster. At present he was drawing hay from a marsh twenty miles distant. "I go one day and return the next," said he. "We cut the grass in summer, dry it and stack it, and we have to bring it to town before winter, because there's no track broken through the snow out that way. It's wilderness nearly all the distance, and an awful poor sandy road. I started from the marsh with my load at six o'clock yesterday morning, and it was almost dark

when I got here. There's all kinds of lakes out there. A man is staying in a tent near the marsh to hunt and trap, and he helps me load. We've got about thirty ton to cart out."

"Did yez get the lunch we put up for you day before yesterday?" asked the landlady who just then came in from the kitchen.

"No," replied the teamster.

"We knew you didn't," said the landlady's daughter who was waiting on the table. "The night before, we'd been to a grange meeting feed at the schoolhouse hall, and after that was over we put what wasn't eaten in two baskets and left 'em just inside of the schoolhouse door, as we told you we would. But the next morning three boys found the baskets and took 'em down to the swamp on the other side of the schoolhouse. Someone saw 'em with the baskets, and by and by told me, and I and another girl run after 'em. When we got there they'd emptied one basket and started on the other. 'Twas too bad. There was a big dish of beans, and chicken, and fruit, and everything. Mr. Connors gave the boys an awful licking except the smallest one, who was led into the mischief by the others."

"Well," said the teamster rising from the table, "what's done is done and can't be helped. It's time I was starting. I'm anxious to get that hay down here. Winter's almost due now."

"That's so," said one of the other boarders. "You can look for snow in this country any time after the

Fourth of July—and any time before, too. You can't even raise corn to advantage here. It's only the early varieties that'll ripen."

"We do well with potatoes," affirmed the teamster. "On one farm over south of the town there's eighty-three acres of 'em in one chunk."

"Yes, the potatoes are all right here," acknowledged the other, "but I think the farmers' best chance is to raise grasshoppers and sell the hops."

During the night the weather had cleared, and after breakfast I started to walk to Munising. The road wound along up and down the hills and in and out of the glens, sometimes amid farmlands, sometimes through woods that were attired in autumn-tinted glory. The foliage still dripped with the recent rain, and every puff of wind shook down the water-drops, and set some of the leaves adrift. Finally I descended to a wide hollow by the shore of the lake, and there was Munising—a good-sized new town, with a big pulp-mill and saw-mills, and straight-angled streets and monotonous rows of small wooden houses, and the usual proportion of stores, churches, and noisome saloons.

To come out of the wholesome and satisfying woodland with all its grace and beauty into this raw new town was far from agreeable, and I hastened to get away. By following the shore eastward, I soon left all habitations and highways behind. When I could, I kept to the narrow strip of beach which in places was stony, but usually was of fine white sand. There were frequent



*Making repairs*



stretches, however, so obstructed with logs and snags, pieces of wrecks and other drift rubbish that I had to make my way through the bordering woodland. There was always a path that threaded along in an irregular way a little back from the water, but the trail was so faint and brushy that in spots I had difficulty in distinguishing it. Why there should have been any path at all through that lonely tangle was a mystery until I met a hunter laboring along it, who had been off eight or ten miles after ducks. The ground underfoot was often swampy, or my progress was half blocked by weeds and saplings, and now and then I was obliged to climb over or crawl under a tree that had fallen across the path. Occasionally I got off the trail entirely, but I would soon be brought to a full stop by the thick undergrowth and had to retrace my steps. Outside I could hear the wind assailing the forest and dashing the waves up on the shore, and far above me I could see the tree-tops swaying, yet in the woodland depths where I was walking it was very quiet, and only the faintest breath of air was stirring.

At length I came to a point that reached far out into the lake. Here the ground was sandy, the woods more open, and there were patches of huckleberry bushes. I even found a few belated berries amid the reddened foliage. When I went to the other side of the point the swampy jungle resumed its sway along the shore, and I turned and struggled back to Munising.

On another day I attempted an exploration in the

opposite direction and plodded a woodland road that kept near the shore westward. Where the road was swampy it was made solid with corduroy and some of the logs used for the purpose were fully a foot in diameter. Those that made too pronounced a hump had been slightly hewed off at the places where the wagon wheels passed over them. Originally this had been a logging road, but the finer timber was now all gone from the neighboring forest, and the neglected road was getting mossy and grass-grown.

I had begun to think of retracing my steps when I was surprised to come to a gate, and to see a house on ahead. I went on then more eagerly and soon was in a really delightful little fishermen's settlement of four dwellings, with accompanying barns and sheds, and a tiny schoolhouse. The shore was variegated with bluffs and green dells, and the rocks were much worn by the waves. Even the rocks that were many feet above the reach of the water as it is now were deeply sculptured, plainly showing that the lake in ages past stood at a far higher level. Each house had an individual and interesting setting amid trees and rocks that gave a sense of cosiness and protection, and yet allowed an outlook on the lake. They were a part of nature to an unusual degree. Slender paths trodden in the turf linked the scattered buildings together, dodging here and there around ledges, or wet hollows, or tree clumps, and passing through various gates. Little wharves reached out into the water, and there were great fishnet reels on

them, and boats lay alongside, and on the adjacent shore were piles of driftwood rescued to use in the home stoves. On the slopes back of the houses were a number of open fields and pastures, and a few grazing cows and calves.

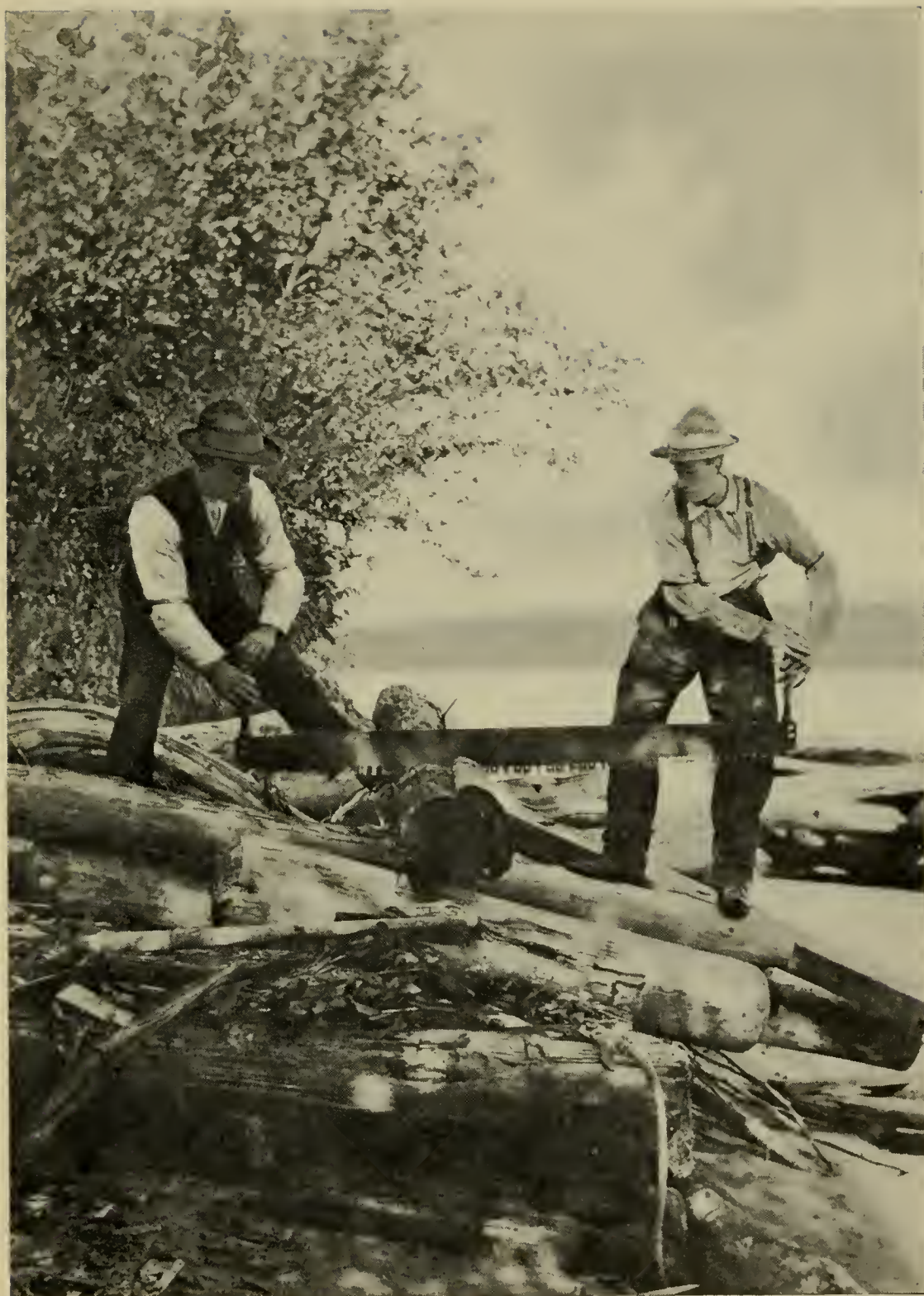
The men farmed in a primitive sort of way, and they mowed all their grass with scythes. They hoed their potatoes and made hay mostly on days when the wind blew too hard for their boats to go out to the fishing-grounds. Incidentally, their firewood supply needed pretty constant attention. Their winter wood came from the forest, but for the summer fires a man would go in a rowboat along shore, pick up a load of driftwood, and drag some logs behind to the home waterside.

The inmates of the four houses constituted most of the inhabitants of the town of Grand Island, and only in those four families were there any children. The four families were all closely related, and even the school-ma'am, though she came from a distance, was a relative. So few were the voters that the distribution of the town offices presented a problem of considerable difficulty. Financially the town was well-to-do, because a certain business organization that has large interests on the lakes chose to pay taxes on some of its shipping there. At one time the townsmen got critical because the shipping was assessed at no more than a quarter of its real value. "But when we told the company we were going to raise their valuation," said one of the villagers, "they replied, 'All right, then we will enter it else-

where.' Of course we didn't want to lose that chunk of taxes, and so we kept quiet."

Eleven children attended school. When I met and spoke to them their shy and gentle manners were quite delightful. There was none of the bold pertness so often characteristic of the town child. Their pleasures were rather limited. They told me how they played hide and go seek, and angled after fish from the wharves, and sometimes went in a motor-boat to the fishing-grounds, but no doubt the woods and caves and waters around furnished much entertainment they forgot to mention. They had been only a few miles from home, and the water had been their usual highway when they journeyed out into the world. It was on the water, too, that their parents commonly travelled, and the corduroy road was seldom used except in winter.

One of the men was building a boat in a long low shed on the hillside, and I spent a good deal of time sitting amid the chips and shavings there talking with him. The boat was seventeen feet long and six wide, and it nearly filled the shed, but left room at one end for a bench and a little stove. My companion wore a bushy full beard that stood out all around his face and framed in the features it did not hide. He was mild-mannered and soft-spoken, as if nature's mystery in the forest and on the waters had subdued any loud and rough tendencies; and he was philosophic and leisurely, not easily stirred to either ire or levity, yet sometimes breaking forth with a vigorously-stated opinion, or a



*Driftwood for home fires*



wholesome ripple of laughter. Once, when I entered the shed unexpectedly, I found him talking to himself.

"That's a trick I learned while I was out in Oregon, years ago," he said. "I had a ranch there in the woods three miles from the nearest family, with no company but my cattle and sheep; and yet I enjoyed myself there the same like as in a crowd—yes, better than in a crowd. For months I wouldn't see another human being, and as I didn't speak a word all that time, when I went out and saw people and tried to talk I couldn't. I knew how to make the sounds, and yet I couldn't make 'em. I'd just whisper and squeak and squeal. If a person was silent a year, I believe he'd lose his voice altogether. To keep in practice I got to talkin' to myself, and now I can't break myself of it. I've known others who had the same habit. There was John Murray who used to teach school here. He was educated for a Catholic priest, but he was gifted with drink, and after a while he built a cabin down at Mushrat Point, where he stayed all alone and raised potatoes. About once in so often he'd come and get a jug filled with whiskey so he could have a spree. He was always talkin'—talkin' to his work, talkin' to his old shoes, to his cat, to the little birds—anything.

"And here you find me talkin' to my boat. I've got the keel laid and the ribs in place. Those ribs are cedar. I've been hunting for proper trees all summer. It's awful hard to find 'em with the natural crook—you bet it is! But you cut those that grow so and there's no

spring in the ribs of your boat. They'll stay right there. I'm goin' to use spruce boards for the shell of the boat above the water line, but below I'll use oak because that stands buntin' agin' the rocks better. The bottom is very broad. I want to be able to navigate shallow water and to go ashore without wading and getting wet.

"My father came to this region from Illinois about 1840 and brought his family. He settled over on Grand Island, and his was the only white family anywhere around. As time went on he got to have quite a group of buildings—a house, store, blacksmith's shop, cooper's shop, stable, and warehouse, all of logs. When there began to be steamboats on the lake he chopped a good deal of cord wood and hauled it down to the point with his oxen to sell to the boats.

"He kept several cows, raised hay and potatoes and other vegetables, did some fishing, built boats, and at times made steel traps in his blacksmith shop; but his main business was trading with the Injuns for furs. He kept such trinkets and supplies as they wanted, and of course, like all those that dealed with Injuns, he had to have a little whiskey for bait. However, he didn't let 'em have all the drink they asked for. Trading with them was profitable. He gave them a little something for their furs—about a third of what they were worth, and charged four or five times the real value for what the Injuns bought. You must remember, though, there was considerable risk and expense getting things here. They were mostly brought in bateaux and canoes. The

only larger boat on the lake at first was a little schooner that had been hauled over the portage at the 'Soo.' The furs we got were such as martin, fisher, otter, beaver, muskrat, and once in a while a bear or a link. Sometimes the water would be covered almost with the birch-bark canoes of the Injuns. The Injuns did their paddling when it was ca'm and stopped when the wind blowed, and they often camped on the island a day or two and then went on again.

"At the places where they lived they planted some stuff such as potatoes, pumpkins, squashes, turnips and corn. Sometimes they'd have enough potatoes so they'd bury a part of 'em in the ground for winter use. They didn't wear as much clothes as they do now. In summer the men would often have on just a breech clout; but the big men—the chiefs—would perhaps wear leggin's and knee-breeches of buckskin, and have their hair full of feathers, and they'd be painted and everything else. I recollect seein' a party of Injun fishermen go by on the ice one winter day, and the wind was blowin' like the dickens, too; but they had no pants on, and their shirt-flaps were fluttering about their shanks. They were on snowshoes and had moccasins that came most up to their knees. They didn't seem to be sufferin'. No, they were havin' a good time, singing, cutting up, and raising the Old Harry, as they drew their sleds along. It depends on what you're used to. The warmer a man dresses, the more he feels the cold.

"I never had any great liking for the Injuns, but they

had their good points. If one of 'em owed you, and he had a streak of luck he'd work his best to get the money to pay you. He'd come and pay you if he could, even after years had gone by. But you take a white man, and the longer he owes you the worse he hates to pay you. Ah, you want to collect a debt quick, for the chances of payment grow slimmer all the time.

"The whites and the Injuns have had their wars, but you really couldn't blame the Injuns for bein' hostile once in a while. See how the whites destroyed the animals the Injuns depended on for subsistence—killed 'em for sport and the markets. People tell about the Injuns bein' cruel and barbarous in their warfare, but the whites were a darn sight worse. The whites showed no mercy whatever. Sometimes an Injun would steal a little, but good heavens! look at what the whites would steal from the Injuns. In some way or other they'd get all the Injuns had; and it was natural for the whites to kind of stick together and defend one another whether they were right or not. It's the same in our treatment of the negroes—we ain't fair, we ain't just. The truth is, the white man is the worst animal there is—and the best.

"The woods used to be full of trappers everywhere, and there's lots of 'em even yet. Father and I would go about fifteen miles south of here to where the country was all full of swamps and lakes and the finest hard timber. We'd go early in October carrying all the blankets and provisions we could stagger under. The



*Examining the nets*



first thing we did was to fix up our camps and get our traps out around. At our main camp we had a good log cabin with a puncheon roof. The roof had just one slant and was made of small straight pine and cedar logs. These were split once, and hollowed a little on the flat side, and then fitted to each other, first one turned up and next one turned down so the edges fitted into the hollows. The cracks were caulked with moss to prevent the roof from leaking. In the cabin, on the high side, we made a fireplace and chimney of big, heavy puncheons set on end and running up through the roof a little. At the front of the fireplace the puncheons rested on a crosspiece about five feet from the floor. We didn't build the fire near enough to the puncheons so they'd burn, but they'd get awful black with a coating of sut. The cabin had no windows. We dressed the hides outside, or, if the weather was bad, by the fire.

"We had trails off every way from our main camp, and in the fall and early winter when the days were short we couldn't always make the rounds and get back. So we had some little leantos at the more distant points and often stopped in 'em over night. In three or four places where we wanted to paddle around on the water we kept a dugout. We had our lines blazed out through the wilderness from each lake or stream to another lake or stream. We'd simply mark the trees that came handiest, and if the underbrush and stuff was right thick we'd cut it. That would save a feller from takin' a header once in a while. After a time a slight footpath

was worn that guided us, but when snow came we had to depend on the blazes. Later we'd tread a sort of dent in the snow that we could follow, and very few storms would entirely hide it.

"When there was good snowshoeing we could always get back to the main camp at night. Oh, yes, you could travel twice as far on snowshoes as you could when the ground was bare, and be less tired. Ten or twelve miles tramping in the woods before snow came was harder than twenty-five or thirty miles later with snowshoes. You could just sail right along with those on your feet. That's partly because the brush was covered up or bent down by the snow, and the snow had leveled up a good deal over the logs, stones, hollers, and knolls.

"Lots of times we'd make a trip around and get nothing, and then again we'd bring back a good load. If we caught an animal alive we'd skin it at the trap. It didn't take long to pull his jacket off. We'd use the carcass for bait or throw it away. Mink, beaver, and otter, which we mostly caught under water, would be drowned but not frozen. Martins, fishers, and such animals as we'd ketch in deadfalls were of course frozen stiff, and we had to carry 'em to camp. It would be a day or two before they'd thaw out so we could take off the hides.

"Every eight or ten days we'd come back home to get another load of food. We'd fetch in our furs and perhaps some fresh meat—a deer we'd shot or a good fat coon we'd trapped. Most generally we'd stay a couple

of nights, for there was always wood to cut or something else to do to fix the family comfortable.

"I've read stories about trapping wild animals in the woods, but they weren't much like what I've experienced. The stories would have a good deal less excitement in 'em if the authors told the truth. It's very rare that an animal will attack you. He only does it when he gets cornered and can't help himself any other way. Every animal will fight for its life. Even a mouse, if you get him in a cup so he can't escape, will turn on you. He'll bite you, by George! Yet, let him have a chance to run and away he'll go. If you corner a buck he's so crazy to escape he'll stick his prongs into you, or maybe jump over your head. I believe one of these timber deer, if he had a good start, could jump over this shanty. Swamp deer are somewhat shorter legged and can't make as high leaps.

"The Injuns were a little afraid of bears and wolves, but I don't know why. I've had no fear of their attackin' me. I never see but one or two wolves, and I didn't know what they was they was so gentle. I thought they was big dogs. But I know their tracks. The two front toes reach out longer than a dog's and the foot makes a more diamond shaped print.

"Of course, if you go and get hold of cubs when the old she-bear is around, she will fight and cuff you; and a man must expect to be hurt if he goes to ketchin' hold of a wounded animal. You can't blame a creature for fighting that has a big steel trap on its foot, though you

can bet he would put himself out of sight in a hurry if he could break loose. I've heard of people getting hurt by wild animals that were free in the forest, but I can't believe it. The man who gets hurt under such circumstances must be a blame fool. I didn't consider any of the animals we had here dangerous to man, and I never lay awake nights for fear of 'em. Men who've lived among 'em pay no more attention to 'em than to domestic animals."

Toward the end of the day the fishermen who had been out in the boats returned, and I obtained permission to stay over night in the home of one of them. While supper was preparing I sat by the stove in the kitchen, a large room that was dimly lighted by a single kerosene lamp. The baby was toddling about the floor and frequently getting into trouble and squalling vociferously, which sometimes caused the mother to pick it up and try to work with it in her arms. The other children were all uneasy and inclined to be quarrelsome and noisy. They regarded the food on the table with hungry eyes, and one of the small boys edged around to where he could begin eating his huckleberry sauce. His mother presently observed him and ordered him away, but he soon crept back, and, crouching in the shadow of the table with his chin on the level with its top, he continued to spoon the sauce to his mouth and stain the spread at the same time.

By and by the fisherman, who had been milking the cow, cutting up firewood, bringing water from the lake,





*School children*

and doing other small tasks came in, and we sat down to the table. After supper, he and I drew back our chairs and talked, while the mother cleared away the dishes and got the children off to bed. We heard a motor boat go past, and he told whose it was. The sound of each motor had its individuality, and the people along shore recognized their neighbors' boats without seeing them. He and the other fishermen followed their calling the year around. In summer they were out on the lake in their gasoline launches from seven in the morning until four in the afternoon; and in winter they went with dog teams and fished through the ice.

"When we're winter fishing," said he, "my brother and I cut three holes apiece where the bottom has a gradual pitch, and the three holes are each over a different depth, for the fish have a way of biting in one depth for a while and then quitting and biting at another depth. We hang around and watch our lines, and when a fish gives two or three little bobs at a hook we make a grab. It's lake trout we get mostly in winter. We ketch 'em up to about forty pounds. Sturgeon are the only fish in these waters that grow larger, and they're scarce. A big one will weigh eighty pounds or more. We didn't use to think they were good for anything, but now, by Jove! they bring about the best price.

"Our summer fishing is largely done with nets, but we use lines, too—lines that are maybe a couple of miles long and have a hook every twenty feet. Once in a

while we run across a lawyer streak with our lines, and 'bout every hook will have a lawyer on it. These lawyers, or bullheads as they're called by some, are ugly lookin' fish—too much like a lizard, and the taste is nothing extra, but the flesh is white, and there's not many bones. One time a fellow down here at Munising went to skinning 'em and calling 'em 'fresh water cod' and he worked up quite a trade at ten and twelve cents a pound. People who didn't know what fish it really was thought 'twas fine. He was an old Canadian Scotchman, and rather an undesirable citizen, with a habit of lifting other people's nets, and examining their hooks. Oh, he was a bad one! He'd fish in the brooks for trout, and if he couldn't ketch 'em with a hook and line he'd dynamite the streams. He lived from hand to mouth, and when he got a little more money than would pay for his next meal he'd spend it for whiskey. If he was put in jail he didn't care. Then the public had to feed him and his family, too. He was just as contented in that jail eatin' three meals a day, as he was outside. So finally they shipped him back to Canada.

"I didn't use to stick to fishing as closely as I do now. There was a time when I hunted deer for the Detroit market. We had a three months' open season then beginning August 15th, and I made a pretty good thing. I hunted in the forest south of here. Another fellow hunted with me, and we had several tents and log shacks for camps. We kept a horse and wagon then, and hired a man to do the camp cooking, get wood for the fire, and

take the game to the railroad station. I've killed as high as seven deer in a day. We'd hunt from daylight to dark. The deer feed very early in the morning and again along late in the afternoon. But I used to shoot a good many that were lying down. About noon, if few hunters were in the woods, they'd be resting on the hills, where they could look well to leeward. They depended on their scent to guard 'em from the other direction. If they'd been much disturbed they'd go to the swamps.

"Sometimes I'd kill a deer six or eight miles from camp. Then I'd carry it to some lumbering road where the team could be sent to pick it up. I didn't leave it on the ground, for the flesh would have soured and animals would have eaten it; but I'd hang it on a limb and tie a paper to a string beside it to dangle around and scare off the birds. It was within easy reach of the wolves, but a wolf won't take anything in this country that's hung up. He's suspicious and won't go near it at all. I've seen where a drove of wolves come within sight of a deer hanging up, and then turned and run.

"A bear's different. He'll take any meat he can get at. He don't care as long as no one is around at the time. I guess he'd take it off the corner of your shanty after dark. If he gets your deer he'll drag it away a piece, eat all he wants and bury the rest with leaves and sticks. You can generally calculate on his coming back after the buried meat the second night. Then perhaps I'd trap or shoot him; but if it was too early in the season

for his hide to be good I wouldn't bother. Once I had a ham hung up on a sapling. I'd bent the sapling down, cut off the top, tied on the ham, and let it swing up fifteen or twenty feet in the air. But a bear come along later, bent down the sapling and went off with the ham. I saw his claw marks on the bark of the sapling.

"There's still occasional wolves near here. Bounty and hide together a wolf fetches about fifty dollars. P'ison is about the best thing to work with if you are after wolves, but by the time you've p'isoned one or two out of a flock the rest have got cute and won't touch nothin'. Then you have to try some other scheme."

Bedtime had come, and the fisherman showed me to my room. To go upstairs we had to push aside a piece of old sail tacked up to serve instead of a door at the foot of the stairs, and we had to step over a board nailed across to keep the baby from climbing out of sight and hearing. My room was rather small and forlorn. There was little furniture, and the white plaster walls had never been papered. However, that mattered little, for the window opened toward the lake and I was soon lulled to sleep by the waves lapping along the shore.

When I went back to the town the next day it was on one of the fishermen's launches. I lay in the warm sunshine on the deck while the boat cleft its swift way through the clear water, and skimmed along past the wooded shores with their golden foliaged hardwood, and their dark evergreen spires. The experience was





*The duck hunter*

delightful, and that water journey and my stay in the idyllic little fishing village are among the pleasantest memories I have of the Great Lakes.

NOTE.—The Pictured Rocks have such repute that passenger steamers on Lake Superior, when the weather permits, approach as near shore as possible to afford a view of them. But the best way to see this fantastic and romantic five-mile stretch of sandstone bluffs with its staining of color and its cascades, is to go there from Munising in a motor boat. Sail Rock, which resembles a sloop in full sail, the Grand Portal, and the Chapel, are perhaps the most striking features of the series of cliffs. This vicinity is in the heart of the Hiawatha country, and Munising occupies the site of the wigwam of Nokomis. Grand Island, which lies off shore here has marked attractions as a summer resort. There is good fishing in the region, and Lake Superior fish have the reputation of being better than those from any of its companion lakes. Superior is the greatest body of fresh water on the globe, and has an average depth of nine hundred feet, while Erie, the shallowest of the lakes, averages only eighty-four feet. The coast line of Superior is very irregular and has a length of fifteen hundred miles. It is generally rockbound and its shores excel in picturesqueness. Its size and depth and northerly situation combine to keep its waters very cold even in midsummer, and this with the clearness of the water give the fish their fine quality.

## XI

### THE COPPER COUNTRY

FROM the broad peninsula that reaches up into Lake Superior and forms the most northerly portion of the state of Michigan comes one-seventh of the world's production of copper. I wanted to see the region, and in particular I wanted to see the famous Calumet and Hecla mine. It was my hope that the scenery would be wildly impressive, and that the aspect of the mine would in some way be romantically interesting. But the country is a rather featureless rolling upland, and the mine is in the midst of a city of forty thousand people, and what you see of the property at the surface is scarcely more impressive than a group of factory buildings would be. Calumet, as the city is called, is notably clean, substantially built and attractive. Its streets are wide and well paved, excellent roads lead out into the farm country surrounding, and here and there among the buildings rise dark Lombardy poplars—trees that give a touch of distinction and scenic decorativeness to any place. A slight ridge runs through the town and continues far out into the regions adjacent. This marks the copper-bearing streak of rock, and at intervals on it are huddles of mine buildings and smoke-belching chimneys.

Copper was mined on the peninsula as early as 1843, and much rich ore was taken out long before the Calumet lode was discovered. When I began to inquire where I could get first hand information about the beginnings of the Calumet and Hecla mine I was directed to a somewhat eccentric German who was an early comer to the region. "He's got a little saloon in a ramshackle building he owns on one of the main business streets," I was told. "The saloon is in the back corner of a large room, and the rest of the space is furnished with rude counters and tables. Travelling men rent the privilege of showing their goods there. You'll find him sitting by the stove near his bar. He's an old man now. There's not many customers to bother him, so he has plenty of time to talk with you. You wouldn't think to see him that he was a millionaire, but he is. He commenced, at the very first, to buy Calumet and Hecla stock, and he's been putting his income into that stock ever since. Its par value is twenty-five dollars a share, but the shares have sold for more than a thousand dollars, and in the last forty years the company has paid over a hundred million dollars in dividends. The old German's chief pleasure in life has been the accumulation of money, and his chief sorrow the necessity of spending some of it. The pennies have always looked large to him, and he has let none escape from him when he could possibly avoid such a misfortune. In fact, he has the reputation of being the most tight-fisted man in Michigan. It's told that he once offered the small

boys on the street ten cents apiece for any empty wine barrels they'd bring to him. He knew very well he was simply inducing them to steal from the premises of other saloon-keepers, but that didn't trouble him. He could sell the barrels for a dollar and a half each, and he paid for all the boys secured and asked no questions. But his game was discovered after a while, and such a row was made that he quit.

"Before the electric road was built from here to Lake Linden he used to drive a dray and take baggage back and forth for travelling men. On a cold winter day one of these travelling men noticed that the old man had no gloves, and he took him into a store and bought him a pair. The traveller afterward, with some pride, informed certain Calumet people how he had befriended the old dray driver. They laughed at him. 'Why!' they said, 'that fellow is not so poverty-stricken as you suppose. He could buy out you, and the firm you represent, too. He's worth a good many hundreds of thousands of dollars.'

"A reporter once made him very wrathful by printing in the paper some disparaging comments on his parsimony, and immediately afterward the public were treated to the spectacle of seeing him follow the reporter up the street brandishing an ax. It looked as if there might be a bloody tragedy, but the old man had too good a business sense of the disastrous consequences to himself if he actually committed an assault, and he did not go beyond noise and bluster."





*The well*

I was sufficiently interested to hunt up the old man's place of business, and when I went in he sat beside the stove near his dingy bar, with a blanket wrapped about his feeble and withered form. "It was fifty-six years ago that I came to the copper peninsula," said he. "Mines had been started along the shore, but when the Civil War came to an end the price of copper dropped from forty-five cents a pound to fifteen and knocked 'em all higher'n a kite. Besides that, the ore was rotten after they got down two or three hundred feet. 'Twas so poor it wouldn't pay to mine it the way they handled ore then, even if copper had been worth much more than fifteen cents. But now processes are so perfected there's a profit in handling ore with only one per cent. of metal in it. Some of the mines are a mile deep.

"Right across the street here in the olden time was an Indian camp. A white man bought the Indians out for a little whiskey or something, and they moved on. Then he put up a log cabin, which he called the 'Half-Way House,' because it was half way between the Quincy mine to the south and the Cliff mine to the north. It was the only house here. He sold liquor, and he kept travellers over night. For the privilege of sleeping on the floor he charged fifty cents. There was straw to lie on, but no blankets were furnished out here in the bush in them days. You didn't suffer, though. There was a good fire.

"In the autumn of 1865 I was working down at Hancock on Portage Lake, thirteen miles from here, and

the man from the Half-Way House was down there one day and happened to run across me. He said he wanted to buy a sow, and I told him where he could get one. Later in the day I saw him going back with the sow on a big rough lumber wagon. It was all woods the whole distance—no roads whatever—only blazed trails, but he got home all right. After a while the sow had a litter of pigs in a hole left by the roots of a big pine tree that had blown over. When the man went into the hole to ketch the pigs he disturbed the leaves and rubbish that had accumulated there and found chunks of copper scattered around. That was the way this rich thing—the Calumet lode—was discovered. If it hadn't been for the sow this vein of copper might still be unknown.

“A company at once prepared to develop the property. The land around was wild, barren, and naturally almost worthless, but they paid twelve thousand dollars for three hundred and twenty acres. I hauled the first copper ore from Calumet to Hancock, where there was a crusher. That winter a hundred or more teams were going back and forth, and the road would wear full of pitch holes. We had men working nights shoveling snow into the holes and pouring on water to freeze a smooth road. The mining company built some houses, close around the mine, at first of squared timber and then frame buildings, and a little settlement began to grow here in the woods. There was from five to twenty-five per cent. of copper in the Calumet and Hecla ore, but no dividends were paid until 1870.”





*Binding barley*

In my acquaintance with the town I could not but be impressed with the cosmopolitan character of its inhabitants. The mine workers include about thirty different nationalities. Finns predominate, and Austrians and Italians are particularly numerous. Many of them have an ambition to go back to the old country, and simply work and save here a few years, and then return to their native land. They carry enough with them to establish themselves there comfortably and lift themselves out of what had formerly been a grinding poverty. The Finns, however, stay in America, for since Finland has been "gobbled up" by Russia they don't feel that they have any country. In a year or two a man will earn enough to bring his family across the Atlantic. To many of the Finns mining is simply a temporary makeshift. They have a liking for agriculture—especially for dairying, and they soon buy a little farm.

Some of the early comers from abroad started small stores in the town. They sold goods, but besides were often caretakers of their countrymen's money. The immigrants wouldn't trust the banks, and they turned over their savings to the merchants without requiring either security or interest—nothing but a receipt. The merchants invested the money at eight or ten per cent. and it was an important factor in making them wealthy. They have had the use of that money forty years or more in some instances.

The price of copper has dropped radically of late

years, and in consequence dividends have been cut and wages lowered. "But we are not kicking," said one man with whom I talked. "We've always had steady employment here, and while the employers are perhaps selfish like the rest of the world and look out pretty sharply for their own interests they have treated us reasonably well."

Work underground does not seem to be disliked by the men, and sons of miners become miners in their turn as a matter of course. The Calumet and Hecla Company alone employs about five thousand men underground, which represents about half the entire force of such workers in the district. The men work in two ten hour shifts. "I know men," one of my acquaintances observed, "who've worked down below for ten or fifteen years, but in spite of spending so many hours of every day out of the sunshine in darkness that's only lighted by the little candles in their hats, they are as hearty and happy as they were at first. Apparently the mine has no bad effect on a man's health, unless perhaps the dampness brings on rheumatism."

One day I walked to Lake Linden, five miles distant. A raw chilly wind was blowing, but the sky was almost cloudless, and there was an agreeable and satisfying warmth on protected slopes and on the sunny side of buildings. The land had been cleared in recent years, and stumps were plentiful even in the cultivated fields, though they were thickest in the pastures where the cattle and horses were grazing. But the farmers were

gradually pulling them up and burning them, either in the field, or for firewood in the home stoves. I met numerous loads of potatoes that were going to the town, and in wayside fields others were being dug. Most of the diggers were men, but not infrequently women with their skirts fluttering in the wind were helping. The earth was yielding bountifully, and the smooth big tubers, as fork or hook tossed them out, made a fair and delightful sight to any lover of good husbandry.

The farmers to whom I spoke showed the potatoes with pride, and doubted if anywhere in the world I would find the soil doing much better. Some raised oats and barley, turnips and garden truck, but potatoes seemed to be the main crop. One man affirmed that the potatoes were not bringing the price they ought to bring in the town, and in explanation said a good many farmers were indebted to the grocers after a fashion that enabled the latter to set their own price on the products they received in payment. The grocers had been furnishing food supplies to these farmers on credit, and they could oblige them to deliver the potatoes at their pleasure and accept whatever they chose to give. For a time in the fall this method of liquidating debts kept the price low, but as a whole the big town was an excellent market.

The farmhouses sometimes commanded beautiful and far-reaching views over the eastern lowlands even to the blue waters of Lake Superior, but the dwellings

were small, unshaded by trees, and ungraced by shrubbery or vines. Often they were merely unpainted shacks, and a huddle of sheds served instead of a barn, and wagons and farm implements and litter were all about. Their aspect was almost wholly dreary, yet the bounty that the earth yielded was to the inmates probably ample compensation.

One of my wayside acquaintances was an Englishman from the county of Cornwall. He had worked many years in the copper mines, and I asked him about the dangers of the occupation. "I've been very lucky," said he, "in the matter of accidents. The worst thing that ever happened to me was to have a big gob of earth drop on my head. It nearly broke my neck, and if it had been stone it would have finished me. You never know when a mass of rock hanging loose up above may drop on to you, and there's always the risk that a blast may go off when you're not safely sheltered. A good many of my old comrades have been killed. Hodge is gone, and Farrell, and lots of others. It's rare a month goes past but that someone is killed, and the monthly average is five or six. However, that's not a very high proportion considering the great number of men that are employed. A single death at a time causes no excitement, and gets scarcely more than passing comment. Yet perhaps the fellow killed may have a family in the old country, or be supporting a poor mother over there.

"Once a cable broke, a car dropped, and ten men were killed. Another time there was an explosion and





*The kite-flyers*

a fire down in a mine. Most of the men got out, but quite a number were still missing when the company closed the openings in order to smother the fire and save the timber supports in the mine. The chances were that the men were all dead, but there's been bitter feeling against the company ever since because it seemed more eager to save dollars than to save lives. After the fire was out they brought up the bodies of the men who had perished. There were thirty of them, and I saw them laid out at the mouth of the mine."

Every little while a train of small dump cars loaded with ore slid down the long descent from the Calumet ridge to Lake Linden, where there was a great crushing plant. After the rock has been pulverized and the copper extracted, the waste is carried away in a muddy stream through a flume that empties on to a growing pile of sediment of mammoth proportions. The pile is, in fact, now a considerable hill covering many acres. It is a reddish barren mass of earth on which not a thing grows, and it is gradually encroaching on the lake. Formerly the lake water was bright and clear, and was a favorite resort for fishermen. Now the water is clouded with sediment, and no more fish are caught.

The commercial center of the copper peninsula is at the twin cities of Hancock and Houghton on Portage Lake. This lake is so attenuated just there that it would easily be mistaken for a river, and a drawbridge of moderate length serves to span it and connect the two cities. Some ancient convulsion, or other chance,

left a rift right across the peninsula. A deep slender lake filled most of the rift, but where this lake at either end approached the greater lake there were marshes around which the Indians and early navigators had to make a portage. About forty years ago a channel was dredged through the marshes, and now the big freighters and steamers that plough the lakes pass freely through. Most of the enormous output of the mines is sent away by boat from the two cities on Portage Lake, and a single vessel has been known to carry a cargo of copper from here valued at over a million dollars.

The land rises on either side of the waterway very steeply, and the lateral streets of the towns cling along the slopes in successive terraces. On the Houghton side the cross streets climb to rocky upland where the children fly their kites, and the cows pasture. Across the narrow lake, the lofty hill behind the town is of comparatively smooth turf and earth much furrowed with deep ravines. On the summit can be seen tall structures at the mouth of mines with accompanying chimneys and huge dumps of stone, and ore trains are in sight up there moving about, toy-like in the distance. Big freighters pass at intervals on the lake, others are taking on copper or unloading coal, motor boats are making trips hither and thither, and gulls are flitting about and drifting on the water. The combination of mines and shipping, thrifty towns and imposing scenery was very attractive.

I was informed that millionaires were numerous

among the local inhabitants, and that there were no poor whatever. The minimum wage for day laborers was asserted to be three dollars. As to the past of the towns, what interested me most was the story of a fire that nearly wiped out Hancock. "That fire was in 1869," said an informant, "and I came near missing it. I'd had a little scrap with my old man, and I drew a hundred dollars from the bank and went down to Chicago. Every day while I was there I got a letter from mother asking me to come home. Father wanted me back, too, but he wouldn't say so. He was one of them fellers that are rough at times, but good at heart, and he got mother to do the soft-soaping. I stayed a month loafing around sight-seeing. I didn't look for any job, because I kind of expected to come back. Well, on the Sunday after I got here we had that fire. At that time Hancock was a wild West town ten years old. Yes, it was a rough place then, and we thought nothing of seeing half a dozen saloon fronts smashed. Some feller who was raising a disturbance would be thrown out, and he'd throw cordwood or a beer barrel in, and the fellers inside would chuck some things back at him. Cordwood was always handy. We burned it in our stoves, and it was delivered right at our front doors. The pile was left there till we got good and ready to store it elsewhere; or perhaps it was never moved at all except as we gradually took it in as we wanted the wood to use.

"The town had no fire protection, and there wasn't a stone or brick building in the place. They were all

frame structures, mostly two stories high. In case of fire we'd fill pails and try to put it out that way.

"About eight o'clock that Sunday morning, the eleventh of April, someone hollered, 'Fire!' On the other side of the street from our place was a saloon run by a Frenchman. They'd had a wedding there that started Saturday night. In the back part of the building was a dining room they'd cleared up to have a dance in connection with the wedding. Oh, we'd very likely have twenty dances along the street here on a Saturday night in them days, and they'd last till it was time to go to church the next morning. That chivaree at the Frenchman's was still going on when a lamp got knocked over, and all at once the house was ablaze. The wind was blowing, the fire got fiercer, and leaped across to our side of the street. We had a boarding-house, and every boarder grabbed something and went out the back door. In that way most of our furniture was saved. The last thing rescued on our premises was the cow. She was in a shed behind the house. We had turned her loose soon after the fire started, but she ran back in. Now the boarders got hold of her, and two pulled by her horns and another licked behind so she had to go whether she wanted to or not. The fire swept on and only stopped when there was nothing else within reach to burn. The business section of the town was gone and most of the residences, but there were scattered dwellings left on the hill, and the people in them took in their friends.



*On Portage Lake*



“Rebuilding was started at once, and Monday afternoon we were selling drinks in a shack right on our lot. That shack, somewhat enlarged from time to time, lasted us for three years. We’d have put up a good building sooner, but the company we was insured in failed. However, like most of the rest that had fire losses, we gradually recovered, and the town grew up so much better than it was before that the people have never mourned much over the disaster. In fact, you take Hancock and Houghton together and there’s hardly any cities in the northwest, no matter what the size, that are so attractive and prosperous.”

NOTE.—The copper peninsula claims to have some of the finest hotels in the northwest, and the traveller can sojourn there in comfort and even luxury. Some of the scenery along Portage Lake is imposingly attractive, and the busy waterway is not lacking in interest, but among the mines the region is rather soberly monotonous; yet here is a great industry and a person can spend at least a day or two to advantage seeing something of how the work goes forward.

## XII

### THE LAND OF IRON

**I**N the vicinity of Lake Superior, in the three states of Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota, is one of the greatest iron-producing regions in the world. The deposits of northern Minnesota are particularly noteworthy, and their vastness makes quite plausible the suggestion that here the mighty Vulcan, the blacksmith god, located his forge. Iron was first discovered in the state about 1880 at Tower on Vermilion Lake, a hundred miles north from Duluth. Tower was on one of the main routes of the aborigines through the wilderness. It had been a trading post of the famous Hudson Bay Company, and thither Indians paddled from the north by a network of lakes and streams with their fur-laden canoes. Then they packed the furs on rudely-built conveyances, to which they hitched dogs, and went on southward by the Old Vermilion Trail to Fond du Lac at the head of Lake Superior.

When iron was found Tower was a little woodland settlement of only a few houses, and the first white woman to be numbered among its inhabitants had recently arrived, walking from Duluth and taking four days for the trip. She followed a tote road cut through the forest. This was wide enough to accommodate

a team, but was chiefly useful for bringing in supplies on sleds in the winter. Mining was started, and the village grew, but the mining operations were later transferred about two miles distant to Jasper Peak, a height that has the distinction of being the loftiest elevation in Minnesota, though it is scarcely more than a ragged, rounded hill and is in no wise impressive. A new community has established itself at the foot of the Peak, and is more populous than the older town. The shifting of the mining business was a severe blow to Tower's prosperity, and in recent years its chief support has come from two great sawmills on the shores of the adjacent lake. But now the lumber in the immediate region has been practically exhausted, and the sawmills will soon hum with industry no more.

The town, as I saw it, had five weakling churches and seventeen prosperous saloons, the latter chiefly supported by the woodsmen. On either side of a long broad business street was a row of two-story buildings, some of brick and some wooden, varying from the shabby to the substantial, and intermitting with vacant lots. Buildings once stood on certain of these vacant lots, but they had burned and their sites were marked by cellar holes filled with bricks, rusty iron, and like rubbish. On the other lots were rocks and piles of cordwood, wagons, boards and boxes, and whatever else it came handy to leave there. Unoccupied houses were numerous, and there was something of melancholy in the aspect of the town, though it still keeps up a

brave show of optimism. It stands on ground that a few years ago was forest, yet, as is usual in such cases, it is not graced by a single tree that is at all sizable. Cows wandered out to pasturage in the morning, and back to the home barns in the evening. They went and came loiteringly at their own free will, stopping to nibble by roadsides and in open lots, and rambling wherever fields were not fenced against them. Some, if not all the creatures, were loose at night, as I learned by having my sleep disturbed by a cow and a dog that ran afoul of each other and made a great uproar of bellowing and barking.

If one leaves the town he can wander for miles and miles along wild river banks and irregular lake shores and not see a sign of man's habitation; or if there is an occasional dwelling it is likely to be some rude hut, the temporary abode of hunter or fisherman, or is some small farmhouse where a husbandman has started to hew a home out of the wilderness. The season was far advanced here in the north, the trees were nearly bare of leafage, and though the turf in the pastures was still green, the taller grasses and weeds were browned by the touch of the frost, and rustled dry in the wind. Scarce a blossom was left among the wildflowers to brighten the landscape, and whenever I got off the beaten ways I gathered numerous horned and sticky seeds on my clothing.

A cruise on Vermilion Lake affords the best means of seeing the region. The lake is marvellously narrow



*At the end of the day*



and tortuous, full of unexpected twists and turns, and contains three hundred and fifty-five islands that vary from a few square yards to several thousand acres in extent, and it has no less than eight hundred miles of shore line, though its extreme length as the bird flies is only thirty-five miles. The bordering woodland has been devastated by the lumbermen and fires, but on the islands there is still a good deal of the original forest where the dark masses of the tamarack, pine, and spruce are predominant. Few settlers have invaded the shores, and the quiet is seldom disturbed except by the winds, or the crack of a branch broken by passing game, or by the call of a bird to its mate. As you cruise along you never have any large body of water in sight, and to continue much farther seems impossible, and then you slip around a point and through a narrow passage, and go on.

One evening when I was in a Tower store a man who was loitering there remarked on the drought that was prevailing in the region. "I never seen such a year as we been havin'," said he. "There was very little snow in the winter, and we had summer weather in March. Why! the thermometer went up to eighty in the shade, right here in this cold country. They claim the comet that came so near the earth about that time upset the weather, but I don't know. Anyway it's been tremendous dry all the year. We haven't had enough rain to hardly moisten the ground. Generally we have a good flood in the spring. It comes after considerable of the

snow has melted off, but there's a lot left in the ravines to go quick with a rain and make a good head of water on the little streams. That gives a chance to float the logs out, but this year we didn't get a flood, and a great many logs are stranded up in the woods.

"I own a meadow—oh, a matter of eighteen acres,—and I usually get twenty-five to thirty tons of hay off it. This year I thought I did well to harvest seven or eight. We didn't get a half crop even on the wettest flats. When I planted my potatoes, there was so little moisture in the ground and the weather was so hot most of 'em were simply roasted, but those that come up produced fine. We can't raise apples here—our winters are too severe, and all our meat and flour and the like of that comes from the outside. It takes work to make a farm in this country. You can't do as they do on the prairies—just put in your plough and break up the ground. Here you have to clear off the trees and brush and stumps, and the job goes slow for a man with only two hands, you know. Often the land is so tormented hilly and stony that ploughing is impossible. They haven't been farming around here more'n four or five years, and it's mostly done on a small scale as yet.

"This country has been living off the timber so far, and our farmers mostly depend on winter work in the woods to keep 'em going, and there's a whole lot of farmer boys from the southern and western parts of the state who hike up here to get employment in the forest camps for the winter. But the woodsmen are mostly

a roaming class of labor, here one while and way off somewhere else a little later. Take it along in summer when men are wanted out in the Western harvest fields they flock there. Nine-tenths of 'em, the minute they strike town after they get paid off, start in to spend all their money for booze. I've seen lots of 'em right here who've come out of the woods with from one hundred to two hundred dollars, and it wouldn't last 'em three days. Seems to me I'd buy some clothes to keep me warm anyway. But no, the fellow with money goes from saloon to saloon, and of course he treats the crowd. There's plenty of others who're broke that follow right around. By and by he's too drunk to travel farther, and he lies down in the back part of a saloon and goes to sleep. When he wakes up he finds his pockets are empty. The money he worked so long and hard for is gone. It never does him any good, and yet he's always kickin' about his wages.

"After his spree is over and he's penniless, the saloon-keeper perhaps makes him a small loan, and the fellow beats his way to some town like Duluth where there are employment agencies. He signs up to go to work at a place where help is needed and is furnished with a railroad ticket to his new destination, the cost of which is to be later deducted from his earnings. Agencies don't care to hire a man who has only the clothes he wears. They insist that he shall have a 'turkey'—that is some baggage, for a man without anything except what he wears is apt to be too useless and slippery.

Often a fellow will get around the baggage requirement by going to some back alley and picking up old shoes and rags which he makes into a pack. It used to be a trick of the men sent out by the agencies to get off the train before they reached the place where their job was; or if they went to the proper place they'd work a day or two, and then say the job wasn't quite what they expected and then they'd quit and go to work somewhere else. Sometimes the agent may have made the work look a little more inducing than it really was, but mostly the men were faking. They got so they'd do that all the time, and the employer would lose his advances for fare and agent's fee and couldn't help himself. Now, however, a new law fixes that, and the man who skips off is liable to be arrested."

In one of my rambles I went down to the lakeside and walked through the widespread area of lumber piles, platforms, and lines of railroad track around the sawmills. Farther on was a wooded point jutting out into the lake, and a path that led into the thin forest growth enticed me to continue in that direction. I had only gone a short distance when I came to a small board and tar-paper shanty. It was a mere one-room shed occupied by a Frenchman who had married a squaw. The latter was at home and busy about her work. She appeared modest and gentle, and her regular features were rather attractive. Another interesting member of the family was a baby swaddled up in blankets and fastened to a board that could be set up, hung up,

carried on the back or in the arms, or could be laid down wherever handy. Behind the cabin was a plot scarcely larger than the cabin itself, where a few vegetables were raised.

During the summer there had been a tepee and a wigwam on the point, and the wigwam's dome-shaped framework was still standing. It was of slender birch poles, half of which were set in the ground about two feet apart and bent over to meet at the top, and the rest were horizontal ones the same distance apart tied to the others with narrow strips of cedar bark. Near by were several rude little outdoor benches and tables that had been made of boards from the sawmill.

When I inquired where I could find Indians actually living in such aboriginal dwellings as had been on this point, I was told that I could get the information at an Indian mission a few miles away across an arm of the lake. So I hired a boat and rowed to the mission. There I was rejoiced to learn that such a settlement as I wished to see existed within easy walking distance. Two Indian boys were detailed to act as my guides, and we crossed a field, crawled through a barbed wire fence, and entered the woods, following a narrow trail that showed signs of being much travelled. The bordering trees had been cut away enough not to be troublesome, but there were numerous roots and stones that made the path far from comfortably smooth. Moreover it passed over a good deal of boggy lowland where poles and sticks and logs had been laid to keep the wayfarer

out of the mud, though these afforded a rather unstable footing. Fallen leaves strewed the path, and made even its best portions slippery, and I could not get a grip with my feet to move easily and rapidly. I marvelled at the progress of my guides. The little fellows seemed to be making no effort, but they swung along with a soft-paced swiftness that constantly threatened to carry them out of sight. I had to scramble forward at my best pace.

It was quite attractive there on that winding path, going up and down the little hills. Much of the time we were in birch woods where the sunlight fell on the white trunks, and on the golden leaves still clinging to the twigs, and on the many-tinted forest carpet.

By and by we came out of the woods to a brushy slope bordering the lake, and here were the scattered habitations of the Indians, some of which were little one-room log cabins, some huts of cedar bark, and others wigwams of birch bark. Our first greeting was from the village dogs. They were inclined to bark and growl and snap at us. Evidently my guides had expected this, for as we drew near to the hamlet they had picked up some stout cudgels, and now they thwacked every dog that came within reach so vigorously that the surly creatures retreated with bristling fur to a safe distance.

Adjacent to each hut was a tripod of poles from which a chain or piece of wire dangled down and suspended a kettle or pail over a fire built below. The huts them-

selves were mostly warmed with stoves, and a stovepipe projected through the roof. One wigwam, however, had the fire in the middle on the floor, and a hole above at the top of the birch bark dome offered inducements for the smoke to escape skyward. But doubtless atmospheric conditions were often such that the smoke filled the hut. The bark covering was in strips two feet or more wide and five or six feet long, with a slender stick fastened at either end to keep the bark from splitting and curling. The bark is only brittle in cold weather, and when not in use the strips could be rolled up fairly compact. Basswood bark was used to sew on the end sticks, and the same material served for stitching strips together. So loosely did the strips lie on the wigwam framework that wind and storms could not have been excluded very effectively. Instead of birch bark some of the Indians of the region covered the wigwam frames with deerhides, which they fastened on with the hair to the weather.

An Indian with a wigwam habitation is not very closely tied to a particular location and he moves frequently. When he does so he leaves the old framework behind. I was informed that often when an Indian kills large game such as a deer or a moose he will hang it up, return and load his wigwam and family in his canoe and go where the game is to set up housekeeping and stay at least as long as the meat lasts.

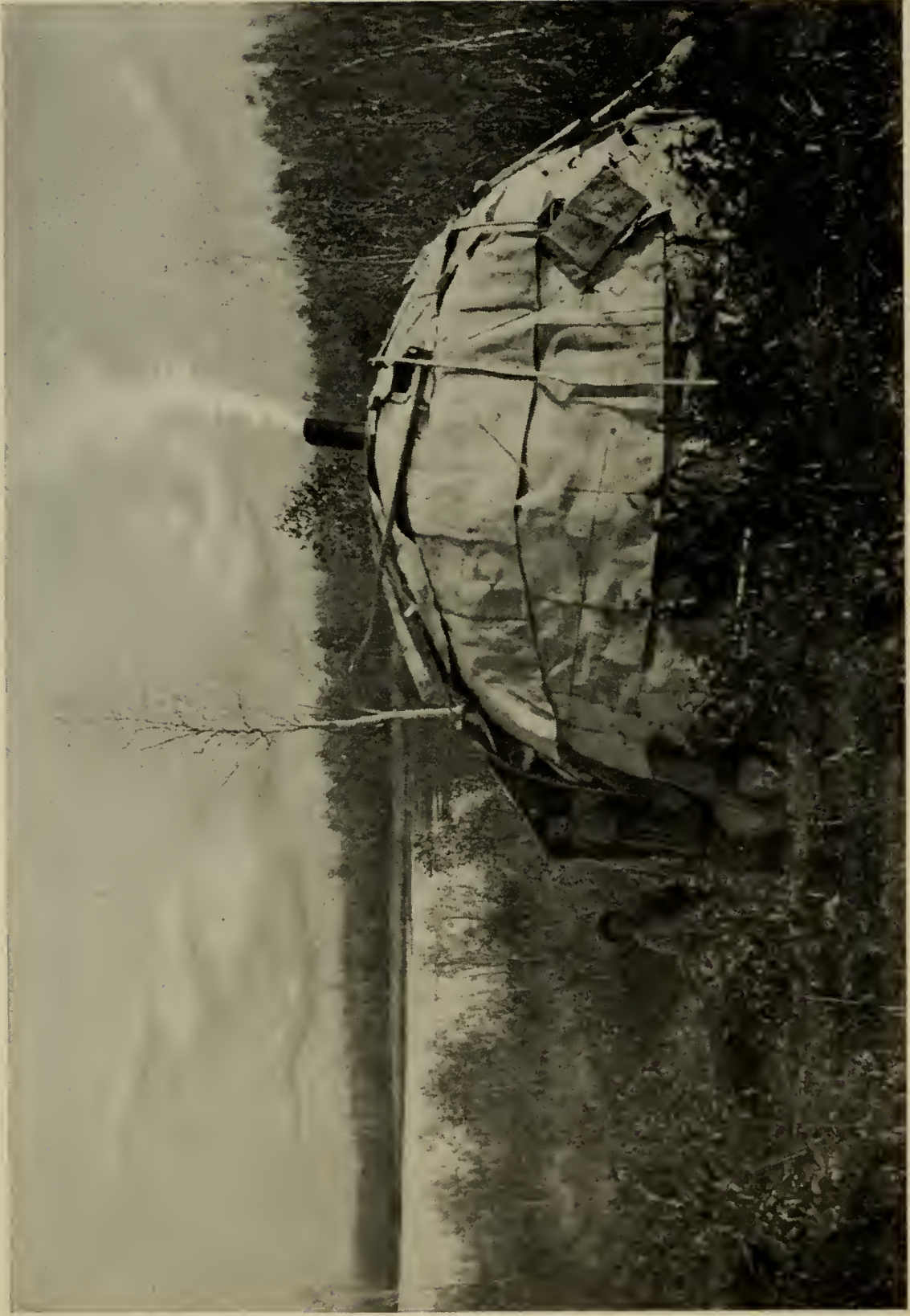
In the stoveless wigwam that I saw, there was a sewing machine tilted unsteadily sidewise on the uneven ground

back of the fire. Blankets and other household belongings bestrewed the interior in confused masses that were not very suggestive of cleanliness. Several children were sitting or lying on the blankets, and a ponderously fat old squaw with her elbows on her knees was squatted at the entrance smoking a short pipe. Many frequently-used articles were hung up outside or were scattered about near by, and for some distance from the hut the ground was strewn with cast-off clothing, shoes, worn-out utensils, and pieces of fur and bunches of feathers that attested carelessness and a good deal of unthrifty waste. Certainly there was no regard for appearances or for the wholesomeness of the surroundings. The Indians' attempts at agriculture had been limited to a few tiny patches scratched over and planted to potatoes.

A path led from each hut to the shore, where some light, shapely birch bark canoes were drawn up. A man can make a canoe in five days, but it is necessary now to go a long way back in the woods to find a good straight tree of sufficient size. Sometimes a single piece of bark extends the entire length of the canoe, but more likely two or three are used, and at the broader part an extra strip is added on either side. The seams are sewed with balsam roots and made water-tight with a black daubing of spruce gum mixed with cedar ashes.

In one place, among the ragged bushes on the slope, was a group of graves, each with a covering of some sort, or with little palings around it. A slender pole with





*A primitive wigwam*

a white flag at the top was set up on the more recent graves. The latest death had been that of an old woman who was nearly blind. She went to the woods to get bark to kindle her fire, and became bewildered and wandered off in the wrong direction. After a two days' search the Indians found her dead body.

The men whom I saw in the hamlet seemed to have little to do but loaf. Nor were the women much burdened with work either—why should they be with so small an amount of furniture, dishes, or anything else to be cared for? One man showed me a partridge he had shot, and then he laid it on the ground. A moment later he hastily snatched it up just in time to rescue it from a dog that was about to grab it. He hung the bird out of the dog's reach on a framework at the side of his cabin that seemed to be planned for a shed.

When I returned to Tower I met an old man at the boat landing and made some inquiry about the fishing; but I had to repeat the question twice in an increasingly loud tone of voice before I got an answer. "I'm kind of hard of hearing," said he. "I don't always notice when people speak to me, and it's a terrible setback, for I miss a lot of information I'd get otherwise. I hear folks talking, but I don't know what they're saying. Oh, yes, there's good fishing in Vermilion Lake. May is the best time. It's then we ketch the wall-eyed pike. They're a wonderful good fish—they certainly are first-class, and they're large, too. I've heard people say they'd seen 'em that would weigh ten or twelve

pounds, but I never caught one that would weigh over three or four. I have the most fun fishing when we go blueberrying in August, though that's counted about the poorest month in the year for it.

"Blueberries! oh, my! I've seen 'em shipped almost by the carload from here. The Indians bring 'em in from the marshes around the lake. Some years, too, we have quite a crop of raspberries, but there were none this year worth lookin' at. In blueberrying time our family goes twelve miles by boat up to Trout Lake and camp. One of my sons stays here to take care of the farm. He's a pretty good houseboy, and he can cook and make butter, besides milking the cows. Every few days he comes up to the camp in a gasoline boat with supplies. We campers work when we like and rest when we like. That's the way to take an outing. We bring sugar and cans, and we can the berries right up in good shape at the camp."

I was at Tower on Sunday. It seemed as if most of the men deserted the town that day to ramble in the woods or make excursions on the lake, and after they were gone footsteps were very infrequent on the board walks. Probably fifty men went out that day from Tower to hunt ducks and partridges, but it is doubtful if they brought back ten birds all told. When one of these men, gun in hand, and a pack on his back held in place by shoulder straps, passed the hotel, a young fellow sitting near me in the office remarked: "He's got his pack full of whiskey and hardtack, and I suppose

he'll enjoy himself whether he has any luck or not. Five or six years ago you could go out and in a forenoon get all the partridges you could carry. Now you can stay all day and not get enough for a mess hardly. People here hunt 'em the year around. Even if they see a partridge on her nest they'll shoot the head off from her; and the hunters use partridges for bait in their traps. We need about fifteen game wardens to the square mile to keep things straight. What are you going to do with these fellows who work over here at the mines? They pay no attention to the game laws. Year in and year out they supply themselves with venison and don't buy beef. They'll kill deer in midsummer when the creatures are nothing but skin and bones. The meat on the same deer in autumn would amount to three or four times as much.

"Another nuisance is the worthless dogs that amuse themselves by deer-chasing. You kill a deer after a dog has been chasing it a long time, and the meat is no good. The blood gets heated and turns the flesh black. Besides, usually as soon as a dog goes to chasing a deer, a hunter can never get in sight of the game. To let a dog chase a deer all over the woods is not right, and if I ketch one doing it, he's a dead dog, I don't care whose he is. I had a little experience in another part of the state with a fellow who lived on the edge of a town in a cabin where he kept a few small articles to sell. He had a dog that he always spoke of as very valuable, but I wouldn't have given four cents for a carload of such

dogs. It was a dog that had chased most all the deer out of that country. You'd hear the sound of the creature howling through the woods night and day for a week at a time. If the game warden went to his owner and complained, the fellow would just hunch up his shoulders a little and say he didn't propose to have any game warden dictatin' to him about his dog.

" 'But somebody'll shoot him,' says the warden.

" 'Then I'll shoot the feller,' says the man.

" 'You just do that,' says the warden, 'and if this is a civilized country, as I think it is, you'll be strung up before you're a day older.'

"Well, the feller was strong with his mouth, and to hear him talkin' a good many would be scared to death. But his talk made no difference to me. I knew he was a wind-jammer, and that he was much more likely to tell what he'd do to you if you were two or three miles away than right to your face. One day when I was out with my gun I heard his dog coming in my direction, and the dog was chasing a deer, for pretty soon the deer ran past. I let the deer go, but as soon as the dog got into the little open where I was I shot him in the head. He gave one leap and dropped dead in his tracks. I went to the man's cabin, and I says: 'I found your dog out in the woods chasing a deer, and I shot him. You'll find him dead down the road. Now, what are you going to do about it?'

" 'Well,' he says, 'you done a good job. That dog was never at home anyway.'



*The partridge*



"Then I bought a plug of tobacco and went along. He never bothered me, yet if I'd gone sneaking around he might have taken a shot at me on the sly—not to kill but to scare me.

"That was a great region for ducks. One day three of us killed between sixty and seventy there on Ripple River up by Mud Lake, and we only had an old tub of a boat. You couldn't drive 'em away. You'd fire, and they'd rise, but would only go a little distance when they'd drop right back.

"We have a few moose around the lake here, and farther north, back where no roads have been opened up, they tell me moose are numerous. A game warden who's just returned from a fortnight's trip in that direction says he saw fifty odd. There's a boy you can't scare with a dog. I've run right onto one when I was hunting birds. Antlers and all he looked as big as a house to me, and I wasn't long in backing away. But a moose is as easy to shoot as a cow if you manage right.

"I was with a game warden once who went to look up some Indians of the old roaming sort who won't stay on a reservation and who'd been killing moose out of season. We found all kinds of moose meat right in their cabin, and the warden told 'em he placed 'em under arrest. I doubted if they'd come along, for he was only a little feller, while there were seven of them and they were a tough lookin' bunch; but they just grunted and obeyed orders. They got thirty or forty days in jail apiece, and they swore they'd kill that warden. They'll

do it, too, if they ever have the right sort of chance. When they get a dislike for a man they're like bulldogs—you can't do anything with 'em. But they're cowardly and won't touch him unless they are sure they have the advantage.

“I and another feller were trapping that winter near where those seven Indians had their cabin. Not long before the warden arrested 'em they stole a wolf we'd poisoned. We followed the trail of the animal from where it took the poisoned meat to where it died. They'd gone off with it and wagged brush behind 'em to cover up their tracks. A greenhorn couldn't have followed such a trail, but we did. The snow was deep, and as they wore only moccasins, they sank into it so it wasn't easy to wipe out all their footprints. We wore skees, and it didn't take us long to get to their cabin. We went right in and told 'em they'd got our wolf and that we wanted it. They had it behind the stove thawing out, and they brought it to us without any argument.

“Skees are used a good bit up here, but an Indian or a hunter usually prefers snowshoes. If the skees are made of soft wood the snow sticks to 'em on a melting day. Once when there was a crust I made twenty-one miles in three hours on skees with the thermometer twenty degrees below zero.

“One while I worked in a little post office and store on a reservation west of here. Some of the old bucks there were pretty wild and had hair as long as my arm.

The agent didn't believe there was any good in the Indians, and he was always suspicious and never would trust 'em. The natural consequence was that they felt much the same about him, but I had no trouble with them. They wouldn't jump a bill. If they wanted something and said they'd pay at a certain time they'd come with the money as agreed. I think it's their nature to be honest; but the half-breeds are pretty wise, and they teach the others to be crooked, so if you buy furs of them you've got to look out. The hides might be moth-eaten, or not properly stretched or something else the matter that you wouldn't notice. They know it, but they'll take advantage of you that way.

"Another thing—if you was a stranger and was to meet 'em in the woods and ask questions, you couldn't depend at all on their answers. They don't know whether you're trying to arrest them or what you're at, and they'll reply at random and may say 'no' when they ought to say 'yes.' Often you'd think they didn't understand your language. They can talk, but they won't. They'll just grunt, and that'll be about all you'll get out of 'em; and yet if you give those same Indians a little booze they'll talk all day.

"They're pretty decent after you get to know them. I certainly have got some good pointers from them about hunting. They're always on the go, and they know the country. So they understand the habits of the animals and can beat a white man tracking and

getting where the game is; but they're not good shots. Perhaps that's because they generally have some cheap old gun that's no good, and which they can't shoot to hit a barn except at short range. I had a gun once that was so worn and rusty I was going to throw it away, but I showed it to an Indian, and he said, 'Me give otter skin for it.' We made the exchange and I sold the skin for seventeen dollars.

"My grandfather was a doctor in what was then a recently settled part of the state. One winter day an Indian came to his house and wanted him to go seventy miles up in the woods to do what he could for another Indian who had broken his leg. My grandfather started at once. He went with a tote team as far as he could, and walked the rest of the way on snowshoes. He had no anæsthetic, and when he got to the man with the broken leg he said, 'Now, no fuss, no hollering, and I'll give you a big drink of whiskey when I get through, and in order to make you brave I'll give you two drinks before I begin.'

"That was sufficient inducement. The feller stood the ordeal of having his leg set without even grunting, and he was down in town before spring.

"I can take a quart of whiskey and ten pounds of salt pork and go where the Indians live and get more moccasins, bead work, and baskets than ten dollars would buy here. I got a birch-bark canoe worth twenty-five dollars from two squaws for a quart of whiskey one time. But you need to be careful how you

take advantage of 'em. If you want to buy a canoe, and the owner says 'Five dollars,' you may say, 'Two and a half.'

" 'All right,' he says, and you pay the money and go off with your canoe. But he feels you haven't given him a fair price, and he'll steal the canoe from you later and fix it so you'll never know it again. Your only chance to save it is to ketch him in the act. I never seen any Indian yet that wouldn't steal. They won't steal from their best friend, but they will from anyone else, and they only tell the truth when it's for their benefit to do so. Work isn't much to their liking, and if you have a number of 'em at the same job they're no good unless you can keep 'em apart. But if you string 'em along they'll all get together in a few minutes to have a powwow. Or perhaps they're workin' away and they see a porcupine—they'll get clubs and chase the darn thing and kill it. Then they'll all quit work and go to their wigwams to have a dance and a feast.

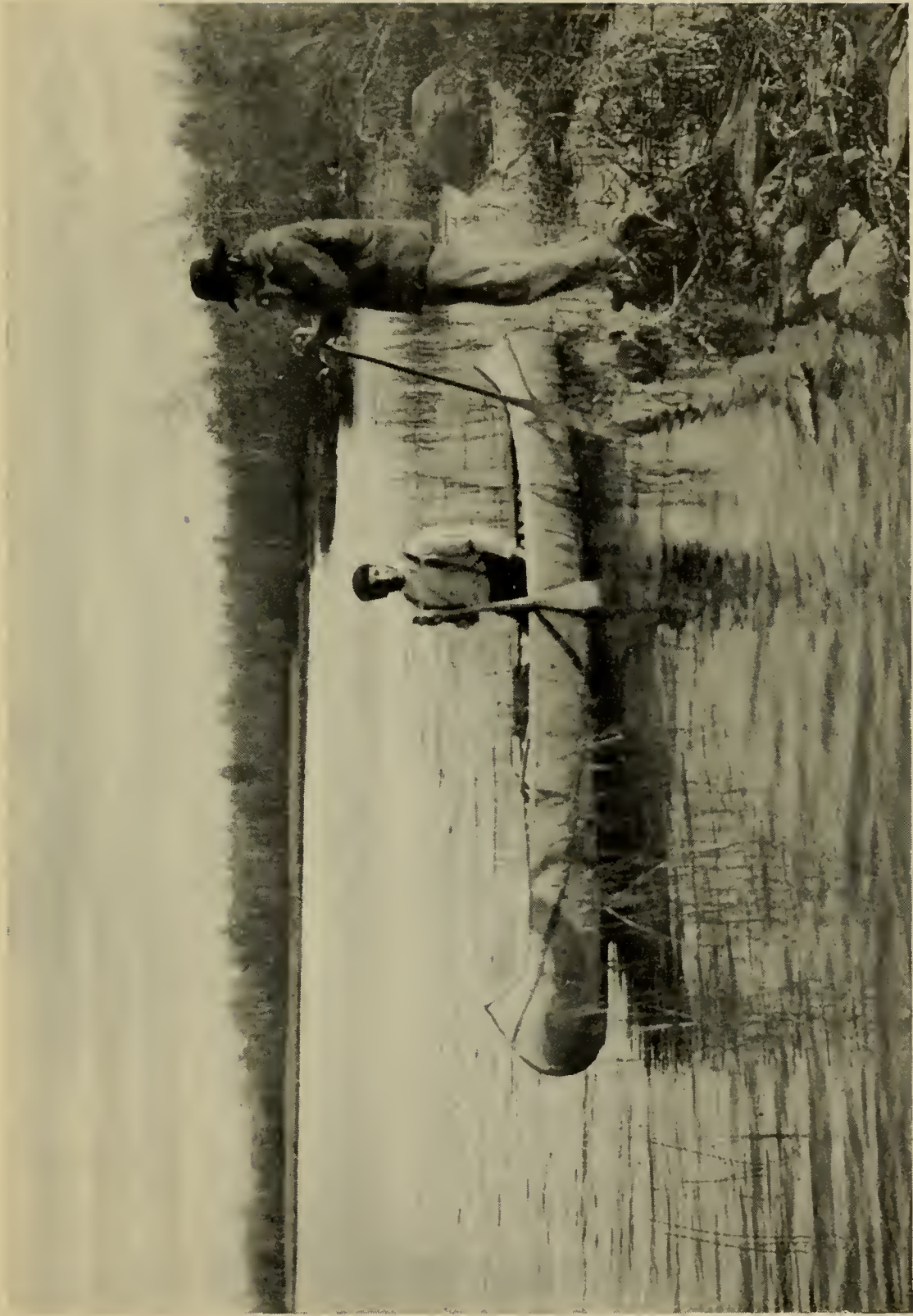
"The expense of living the way they do is mighty small, and most of 'em prefer to hunt, fish, and trap, and stay in the woods rather than to work for wages. If a man gets a mink once a week he'll sell the hide for enough to keep his family. They ain't particular what they eat. When they find a dead animal that ain't spoiled, it don't matter what it is, they'll use it for food. I've known 'em to dig up and eat a cow that was killed by the railroad and had been buried. Once I was workin' in a lumber camp, and a horse died of dis-

ease. We dragged it out in the woods, and a bobcat had been eating at it a week when some squaws came with an axe and cut it up and carried it off. I seen that myself.

“They like sweet things. Candy—gee! it’d surprise you how much they can stow away; and they’ll eat all the fruit you can pile in front of ’em. They’re great for chewing gum. The kind they can get the most of for a nickel suits ’em best. A nickel’s worth is supposed to make five chews, but it makes just one for an Indian. A squaw will put enough in her mouth to gag a horse—she’ll chew a lump as big as my fist. The older squaws are crazy after chewing-tobacco, and they’re so fond of smoking they’ll pick cigar butts up off the street and smoke ’em.

“It used to be the Indian custom to put their dead up in trees on a platform among the branches, but they’ve been burying in the ground for a long time now. They wrap the bodies up in skins and only dig down deep enough so they can cover ’em up good. I’ve dug up some of the old graves. There’s tomahawks and knives and arrow-heads in ’em—just the fighting outfit. The things are all of stone, and it’s a mystery to me how they ever made such sharp points and edges.”

Tower, considered historically and in its location on Vermilion Lake with the Indians and varied wild life in the adjacent forest, is probably the most interesting town in the iron region; but there are other vicinities that as iron producers are more important and have a



*A birch bark canoe*



more picturesque individuality. In particular there are the mines of the Mesabe Range. These are mostly open pits. By some magic the ore was deposited in vast pockets only thinly concealed with earth. When the earth has been stripped away, there is the treasure, a reddish mass, often finely pulverized, and seldom more solid than a crumbly rock. The deeper a mine goes and the more area it covers, the more useless earth and rock roundabout that have to be removed in order to get at the ore and make easy grades for the ore cars to run right into the pits. This waste material piled roundabout often has the appearance of mighty fortifications, and the terraced pits themselves yawn to amazing depths.

At seven in the morning, at noon, and in the early evening blasts are set off in a magnificent series of detonations like heavy cannonading, and when the last echoes fade away a great red cloud of dust drifts up from the chasm and slowly dispels. Then presently the giant steam shovels resume work loading the ore trains. A single shovel takes up from four to eight tons at a dip and will keep three locomotives and as many trains of dump cars busy. When the cars reach the lake docks the bottoms are opened, and the loads rush down long chutes into the holds of the vessels, or into great storage buildings from which the ore can be poured into the vessels at a dozen or more hatches simultaneously.

On the day I left the Mesabe Range a roistering

wind was blowing that fanned the fires in the dry northern forests into fierce conflagrations. Several towns were burned on the Canadian border, numerous lives were lost, and a vast extent of valuable forest was ruined. As I travelled southward the country was enveloped in a dense gray haze of smoke, and our train ran through two or three fires, but these were mere smudges compared with those that were raging in the heavy forests a few scores of miles distant. There was no fine forest left within sight of the railroad, and for tens of miles at a stretch the half devastated woodland as the lumbermen had left it showed the marks of recent fires. These fires had probably not been especially dangerous, nor was the mutilated woodland here of much value, but still the loss was sufficiently dismaying, and the outlook for the future is gloomy. Conditions are such that the region seems doomed to fresh conflagrations as long as there is anything left on the wild lands that will burn.

NOTE.—Whoever visits the iron region of Minnesota is certain to pause at Duluth, finely situated on a bay at the end of Lake Superior. In 1860 it contained only eighty white inhabitants, and had less than four thousand in 1885. It owes its rapid increase since to the fact of being at the head of navigation of the Great Lakes with a rich agricultural and mining region lying beyond. It has a large harbor entered by a short canal, and travellers will be interested in the ingenious aerial bridge by which teams and people cross the canal. The iron country lies about a hundred miles to the north. Not many years ago this was a part of a vast forest region where the lumber industry was at its height; but many a once lively and

prosperous town that was dependent on this industry is now almost depopulated. Sawmills have been abandoned to the elements and scores of lumber camps are going to rot and ruin. Moreover, where the industry still survives, much timber is greedily accepted which a few years ago would have been passed by as worthless.

One should see the open pits of the Mesabe Range, and visit Tower, the pioneer iron town on beautiful Lake Vermilion. At Tower you are on the wilderness borders and have an exceptional opportunity for getting into the uninhabited forest and exploring lonely waterways. Here are Indians who still live in the aboriginal wigwams, and get their living largely by hunting and fishing. The fishing is excellent, and the hunting better than in most sections so easily accessible. Wild rice, which grows best in small shallow lakes, is found in considerable quantities in the Lake Vermilion region. It is unequalled as an attraction for wild fowl and makes the vicinity to an unusual degree the haunt of ducks, geese, and other water birds.

## XIII

### WISCONSIN WATERSIDES

FROM Duluth, "the zenith city of the unsalted seas," I made a long journey to Green Bay, a westerly inreach of Lake Michigan. On the way I spent a good deal of time talking with a resident of a certain Wisconsin city of moderate size whose leading inhabitants were interested to an unusual degree in the lumber industry. Some of them had recently built a pulp mill, and he called my attention to the young growths of "popple" we could see from the car window and remarked: "There's good pulp material in those trees, but it's not always easy to get 'em cut. You'll strike lots of Catholic lumber-jacks who won't have anything to do with cutting a popple tree, and they won't cross a bridge or sleep in a house that has popple wood in it. There's a tradition that the cross on which Christ was crucified was of popple, and they say the wood is cursed on that account. They call it the 'devil's wood,' and in proof of there being something mysterious about it tell you to notice that the leaves never stand still whether the wind blows or not.

"Down in the town where I live there are probably forty men who are worth over one hundred thousand dollars apiece, and the money has mostly come out of





*The straw stack*

the woods. Some of it is theirs honestly, and some isn't. Nearly all the men who have become rich in this country stole timber in the forests for a great many years—vast quantities of it. To explain how they did the stealing I must tell you about the land-lookers or timber-cruisers. I suppose we have ten residents in our town who never have done anything else but look up timber for the lumber companies. They've been in the South, the West, and the North, and they've been to Canada, Mexico, and South America. They get about five dollars a day and found. Sometimes they'll be gone all summer. Generally, when they return and are paid, they go on a drunk. They're not apt to be thrifty, and formerly it was seldom that they would marry before they were fifty. They were in the woods too much, and besides women were too scarce. Twenty years ago there were five bachelors here to one marriageable woman.

“A cruiser may go alone or he may have a companion. I knew of a couple of fellows who were gone more than seven months. They poled up the Wisconsin River in a canoe carrying a bar'l of flour, a bar'l of pork, blankets, a gun, and a compass. When they wanted fresh meat they killed a deer, and they traded salt pork and flour to the Indians for fish. They had climbing hooks, and they'd put 'em on and go up the tall trees and look to see where the bunches of pines were. They'd locate the sections the timber was on and estimate how much there was in each forty. The

result of the trip was that they made millions for the people who employed them. These employers would buy the land for a dollar and a quarter an acre from the government, but they wouldn't buy it all. I've known people to go in and buy one forty and cut a hundred of 'em. But ordinarily they'd buy about one-half and trespass the other half. Often they cut off the government land adjoining theirs and saved their own for years and realized on the increased value of the timber.

"The land they bought, after it had been reduced to a desolation of brush and stumps, wasn't usually considered worth paying taxes on, and most of it went back to the counties. Over in Michigan a seventh of the entire state is even now on the delinquent tax-list. One of our townsmen bought eighty thousand acres of such land at ten cents an acre. There was still some timber on it, and when that had been cut off he sold the land for farms, and it made him a millionaire. As a matter of fact there's been more fortunes made in the lumber and land business in the last fifteen years than ever before.

"A few of the wealthy men in our town are old woodsmen—workers who went to the lumber camps and drove oxen and cut trees with their own hands; but most, at the start, were bright, keen college men who came here and went into the real estate business. If they had brains and ability they'd get in on deals and would speculate in land and perhaps marry the daughters of older men who'd already made their fortunes.

But I don't think they enjoy their wealth. I don't think most rich people do. They trip up somewhere. There's usually a skeleton in the closet. Wealth and success often make a man crabbed and cranky, or his children don't turn out well, or he has rough tastes that don't fit the fine house he builds and the stylish life he tries to adopt. Most of the rich men travel and buy expensive things, but there's a coarse streak in 'em that keeps 'em from getting genuine satisfaction out of the refinements of life. Then, too, they are never satisfied with the wealth they already have, but are in a constant scramble after more, or in a worry lest some of their accumulations should slip away. No, if you knew all about their affairs, you wouldn't swap your troubles for theirs, even if at the same time you traded your poverty for their riches.

"I want you to notice this place we're passing through now. It's the worst town in the United States. See that one long row of buildings—there's sixteen of 'em, and fourteen are saloons. That's all there is to the town. It's just a vice resort for the mine and lumber laborers of the region."

A number of Indian men, women and children occupied seats near us. They were dressed as well and in as up-to-style a manner as most whites. My companion said they were Chippewas of the Bad River Reservation. "There's six hundred of 'em in the tribe," said he, "and they're the richest people on earth. They're worth ten thousand dollars apiece, and

every individual is paid ten dollars a month by the government. That income makes the squaws very attractive to the white men, and whites often marry into the tribe on just that account. The Indians' wealth is simply a matter of luck. When the government put 'em on a reservation some land was selected that at the time was no earthly good. There was a lot of timber on it, but the trees were too small to be coveted by the lumber companies. Now, however, that timber has grown, and is the finest big tract left in the state. The Indians have pretty good houses and are doing some farming.

"That bargain with the Chippewas shows you it isn't every land trade here that turns out as those concerned expect. I'll give you another instance. In the southern part of the state an old Scotch Presbyterian was running a hotel, and he wanted to sell out. A man came along who was willing to swap with him for some land up near Lake Superior. The Scotchman showed the man the hotel building, but he was careful not to take him around to the back because there it was all bulging out and ready to fall. He was an awful talker—that Scotchman—and very religious; but then, the more religion a man has the more likely he is to take advantage of you—that's my experience. He was too thrifty for his children to live with him. There was no doubt about his being religious. He got down his Bible and read a chapter night and morning, and he had prayers five times a day. His prayers weren't short,

either. He never stopped till he'd prayed for everything in the world.

"Well, his hotel was worth about eight hundred dollars, but he wanted eight thousand for it. So the other man put the price up on his land from ten to twelve dollars and a half an acre in order to be on the safe side, and the swap was made. They swapped in the fall and the Scotchman reserved the privilege of keeping on at the hotel till spring. During the winter he cut off a nice orchard of apple trees that was on the place and burned the wood in his stove. But the other fellow got even with him, for he'd sold him some of the worst land in the state. It's on a kind of drainage ridge, and is so dry and sandy and poorly timbered they call it the 'Barrens.' The old Scotchman is living up there now."

It was a relief to get out of the fire-scorched north into the serene and pastoral country around Green Bay. Here the forest period was long enough past so that the scarred landscape left by lumbermen and fires had healed, and the cut-off land had been chastened by the plough into productive smoothness. Yet trees were not lacking, and they were often good-sized and handsome, though only found scatteringly or in small groves. When I left the train I went for a ramble along the southern shore of the bay. The farmers were driving to town on the wide dusty roads with loads of produce, or they were mowing their rowen, or gathering golden pumpkins among the cornshocks, and in one or two

fields husking had begun. By and by I came to a country village. It was a mere handful of buildings at a crossroads on a hill. A little Catholic church stood on one corner with a garden beside it where the priest was pottering around, and there was a saloon on each of two other corners. The remaining corner was occupied by a blacksmith's shop. The blacksmith did not happen to be especially busy, and I loitered at the door of his shop while he commented on some of the characteristics of the region, past and present, starting with some observations on the local weather.

"Last May," said he, "on the 9th day of the month, we had pretty near a foot of snow. But that didn't do any harm except to make a mess of the roads. Later, when everything was coming along finely, and we were having nice warm days, and the trees had blossomed, there was a turn of the wind, it grew cold, and we had a frost that spoiled all our chances for fruit this year. Often it's just as bad at the other end of the season. I've seen it freeze everything so hard on the 2d of September that the vegetables and things were all killed, and the leaves fell off the trees.

"After that May frost it got hot and dry so blame sudden and kept hot and dry so long that nothing we planted would grow. But we got the crops started somehow after a while, and we've never raised any better corn. We can't brag of the other crops. One day a neighbor wanted me to come and see the potatoes in his garden. They were early ones that had been ripe

for some time, but he hadn't dug 'em, and he said they were sprouting and coming up. I laughed at him and wouldn't believe such a thing was possible till I went and looked over his fence. He was right. The green sprouts were coming up like clover all over the potato hills. There'd been a heavy rain following a long dry spell, and that had started them, but it's something I never had heard of before.

"This used to be a French Canadian settlement, but timber is the main holt of the French, and they follow it. Their boys would go off to the lumber districts to work, and in the end the old folks would sell their property for nothing at all and go to live with the children. The Hollanders are getting most of the land now. If a farm is sold you can pretty near tell beforehand that a Hollander will buy it. They're a good deal better farmers than the French were. Well, sir, I believe a Hollander can live and make money where people of any other nation would starve, and they ain't slow in spending a quarter either. It's simply that they get more out of the land. Some of 'em prosper on five acres, and if you strike a man who's got a hundred acres he's considered a good big farmer. I suppose fifty acres is about the average here. The Hollanders are probably more economical in their food than the Americans are, and one man was telling me they e't food he didn't consider fit for his hogs, but that's exaggerating.

"They're great church-goers, and so are the Protes-

tants. Out three miles from here there's quite a bunch of Protestants, and they've got a church there. I attend that church myself, and every time I go I meet pretty near all of 'em. The church here draws its congregation from a territory about eight miles square, and whenever there's a service at the church these Hollanders are on hand, rain or shine. I've got a barn that's usually empty and so has my next neighbor, and in case the weather is not nice those barns are full of teams. It's a matter of accommodation, but most all the men are customers at my shop."

While we were talking three small children of the blacksmith's ran past us. He stopped them. "Where are you going, you fellows?" he asked.

They had got hold of a penny somewhere, and explained that they were on their way to the store to spend it. "Well, go on quick, or I'll cut your ears off," said their father in a gentle and affectionate voice that belied the fierceness of his words.

"Forty years ago," said he, turning to me, "there were no sawmills around here, and the settlers lived in log cabins. You wouldn't find any man with more than five or six acres cultivated. Some of the people were pretty rough and wild, and there are fellows here yet that you wouldn't want to go to and tell just what you think of them. My folks came from Belgium, and for a few years they maybe fared a little harder than they had in the old country. They didn't starve, but that's about all they missed in the way of



*The workers*



hardship. Them first settlers had a tough time. I don't believe we could live with no more than they used to have. At our home whenever we had meat, which wasn't oftener than once a month, we considered we were having a feast. We never kept a pig and wouldn't eat pork because my folks were Seventh Day Adventists and didn't believe in pork. We didn't have anything sweet—that is, no pie or cake, and I'm blame sure we wouldn't buy a pound of sugar in a year. But we had maple syrup.

“My mother died when I was a kid, and my grandmother had to keep me and my brother going. She used to fry some butter with the vegetables, and that did in place of meat. We often had vegetable soup, and we ate corn mush and Johnny cake and wheat bread. Coffee in them times was something that was pretty scarce. Some people would make a substitute out of brown bread crusts. Others would take barley and toast it and grind it, and still others used peas treated the same as the barley. You might have to go to a dozen houses before you'd get a cup of real coffee. My grandmother was very saving. Nothing that was good for food went to waste, and I don't know of anyone who could put things together so nice. She brought all sorts of seeds from the old country, and it was she who kept the garden. She had the pride of the village so far as a garden was concerned. It was right by the cabin near the road, and I remember people saying as they passed what a nice garden it was. We had lots of

different vegetables to eat. Yes, sir, my grandmother was a great old woman for vegetables, and she'd prepare 'em so they'd taste fine, but I might not like 'em now.

"We were Adventists and we kept Saturday for the Sabbath. My father does yet. That is all right on the farm, but when I got out in the world I couldn't strike no steady job and lay off Saturday. Even in this business, with a shop of my own, I couldn't do it.

"The Sabbath began at sundown Friday. You must think we didn't like that very well when we were small, but our folks gave us a little more free privileges than most Adventist boys had. There were eight or nine other families of that faith in the neighborhood. At first they had their meetings at the houses, one week at one house, and the next week at another house, but later they built a church. An uncle of mine was supposed to be the leader, and he preached usually. Once in a while a missionary would come and preach, and sometimes we'd have kind of a debate, and everybody would have a chance to reason and discuss the Word and tell what they thought of it.

"Those Saturday Adventists used to tithe their income, but I don't know as they do that any more. It's some twenty-five or thirty years ago that I'm talking about. Then, if they sold some produce, they'd turn over to the church a tenth part of what they received for it. I knew one family that wouldn't eat an egg unless it was marked down so the church would be sure to get a proper proportion. There's no other reli-

gion where they sacrifice so much. Oh, I tell you they're the most sincere Christians there is in their beliefs. As I recall them, they were a little society, you might say, that was just trying to be brothers and show light to the world. You take an Adventist that you owe money, if you go to him with it on Saturday he won't take it. They avoid all business and work on that day. Some don't even cook their meals on Saturday, but prepare the food the day before and eat it cold. That's too strict for me. They were absolutely temperance, and they wouldn't touch tobacco, and they wouldn't believe in dances or no game of no kind.

"Three different times was set by Advent leaders for the world to come to an end, and there was considerable excitement getting ready, and on the last day or two some would stay without eating and spend their time praying. I can't say just how sure they were that the end was coming; but I remember a funny thing—my uncle, one of those times when the world was coming to an end, sold his farm. The end was expected in two years, and yet he gave the fellow seven years to complete his payments for the place. I don't think he believed very strong in the world's coming to an end, or he wouldn't have been willing to wait till five years after the end for his pay."

From the village hilltop I could see the hazy blue waters of the bay beyond the intervening farmlands, and a strip of wooded shore. This bay was visited in September, 1679, by La Salle, who put in here with

his little fifty ton vessel, the *Griffon*, the first vessel that ever sailed on the Great Lakes. The Indians were vastly surprised to see a ship in their country. To them the vessel was a great curiosity, and scores of canoes would at times gather around her while the savages stared at and admired the "fine wooden canoe" as they called it.

Here La Salle collected a cargo of furs with which he dispatched the *Griffon* to Niagara, while he with a part of his men embarked in four canoes to proceed on an exploring expedition southward. Hardly had the canoes and the *Griffon* parted company when a sudden autumn storm swept across the lake. While the waves threateningly assailed the canoes, darkness fell, and it was only by constant shouting that the men kept their boats together and got to shore. For four days the storm raged with unabated fury, and La Salle and his companions waited in their cheerless encampment, living on pumpkins and maize presented by a friendly Indian chief, and the meat of a single porcupine they killed.

As to the *Griffon*, that was never heard of again, and to this day none can tell whether the ill-fated bark was swallowed in the depths of the lake, destroyed by Indians, or made the prize of traitors.

La Salle did not turn back, but when the lake grew calm continued his journey along the Wisconsin shore. Other storms delayed him, and the party spent wretched days and nights among the rocks and bushes crouched





*The harvest*

around driftwood fires with nothing to shelter them from snow and rain but their blankets. Often steep high bluffs fronted the water so it was difficult to find a landing-place; and when they did land they not infrequently were compelled to drag their canoes to the top of the bluffs, lest by leaving them exposed all night to the waves they should be dashed to pieces. When they reëmbarked in the morning it would perhaps be necessary that two men should go into the water waist deep to steady each canoe until it was loaded. There continued to be lack of food, and the men paddled from morning till night with nothing to eat but a handful of Indian corn, and some hawthorn berries which they picked on the shore and devoured so ravenously they were made ill. Exhaustion and famine stared them in the face until one morning as they were paddling along in the vicinity of what is now Milwaukee they saw numerous ravens and eagles hovering over something on the land. They paddled to the shore and found the body of a deer which had been killed by a wolf. This was a beginning of better things, though they continued to experience not a little of uncertainty and privation. Indeed, La Salle and all the other early voyagers of the lakes and explorers of the adjacent wilderness were doomed to almost constant discomfort and peril.

From Green Bay I went up the Fox River, a stream wild in name and formerly abounding in rapids and waterfalls, but now it is a succession of ponds held back

by dams, and at every dam is a populous manufacturing town. It is the outlet of Lake Winnebago, a rather charming sheet of water rimmed about with low blue hills. I stopped at a lakeside town and went for a walk among the farmlands. It was a pleasant, prosperous-looking region, with scattered, park-like groves of well-grown elms, oaks, and hickories, in whose grassy shade the sleek cattle were feeding. Among other attractions I saw a really delightful country schoolhouse. The surroundings of most such buildings are barren and forbidding, and their appearance is suggestive of the mechanical grind of an education factory. But here was a tidy white structure in an ample yard where grew a number of stalwart oaks, and back of it was a thick wood. I could not help fancying that the rugged tree-trunks and vigorous boughs, the whispering leaves and dappled shadows must have a beneficent influence on those who attended school here; yet I have to confess that when the children were let loose for recess, while I was lingering on the borders of the yard, they were about as noisy and self-consciously rude in their attempts at smartness as the average. I asked them if they played in the woods, and they said they used to, but the teacher had forbidden it because they went on through to an orchard and stole apples. There were thirty children, and they all brought their dinners. Some lived near by, but they preferred the fun of eating with their mates. Across the road was a sober, unpainted building in which the children said the people

of the neighborhood had grange meetings, dances, and Sunday-schools. Not a tree softened its angular forlornness, and I wondered if its sorry aspect did not dull the pleasure of the merrymakings, and make sombre the religion taught there.

In my further rambles around the region I made various acquaintances, among whom I recall with most interest a Polish farmer. With his stubbly beard and corn-cob pipe and rusty clothing he was not at first glance by any means prepossessing, but I liked his self-confidence, and his alert, keen-eyed vigor. He had made a success in life with his own hands and was proud of the fact. Twenty-two years ago he came to this country and married. He had nothing, and his wife had nothing. Now he owns his place clear of debt, and has money in the bank. He had paid four hundred dollars an acre for six and a half acres—a price that included a small house and barn in rather poor repair. Both land and buildings had been improved, and the farm was worth decidedly more than his investment. He raised small fruits, and drove around the country buying chickens, ducks, geese, sheep and other creatures which he fattened and sold. His use of English was somewhat awkward, with reference to which defect he apologetically observed that it was “hard to teach an old dog new tricks,” but that his children were learning the language all right. A good many recent comers from Europe were acquiring land in the vicinity, he said, and were buying out the old settlers. The latter

often were not thrifty, did not want to work very hard, and were extravagant in spending. There were so many things they wanted that they let the money slip away from them and so eventually lost their farms.

Later, when I returned to the town I chatted about farm conditions with one of the merchants. "As a rule," said he, "the land around here gives good returns. Some of the farmers have more money than they know what to do with. Their houses are generally trim and comfortable, their barns large and substantial, their fields clean and productive. A man with a good farm near town has no excuse for not making money. I know a market gardener with five acres who clears three thousand dollars a year. I'll tell you what he done this morning. He brought in a load and went around to the hotels and restaurants, and he'd sold out in a little while, and that load brought him between forty and forty-five dollars. We had such a long dry spell in the early summer that I thought his cabbages would never grow any heads. They were little bits of weazenened up things, but we got a good rain just in time to save 'em. Yes, before that rain the country got to be very brown and scorched, and the cattle looked lean and hungry. You wouldn't see 'em scattered about the pastures eating, but they'd be standing under the trees and in some pool or crick if they could find any that hadn't gone dry. But the rain seemed to give us spring again; the lawns were soon just like green velvet, and





*A schoolhouse*

the green came back to the fields and pastures. So the farmers have had about an average good year.

“Some of ’em are buying automobiles, but take the farmers as a whole, and they certainly don’t have any affection for autos owned by townsmen. If a farmer is driving along the road he will never get out of the way of an auto that is coming behind him until it is right up close and the fellow has pumped his horn for a while. Sometimes he won’t budge even then. One man here in town was out on a stretch of lonely, rough country road with his auto, and there was a load of hay in front of him. He couldn’t get the hay man to turn out, and after a little palaver decided to back. But he found a fellow behind him with a load of potatoes, and the potato man wouldn’t turn out any more than the hay man. The fellow in the auto wasn’t inclined to go on at that snail’s pace forever, and he tried to pass the load of hay. The result was he got ditched and had to pay the potato man five dollars to pull him out. But the next day he had those two farmers appear in court and they was fined twenty dollars each and costs. You see they hadn’t given him a fair show.

“Of course, it often happens that the farmers’ horses are frightened by the autos, and yet if there’s an accident the man running the auto will usually stop and settle for the damages. Still, the farmers feel pretty sore. Sometimes the automobile folks raid the farmers’ crops. Right here in today’s paper it tells about a

Chicago woman who was arrested for that sort of performance. Let me read you her excuse:

“ ‘The motor parties get out in the country, and the things smell fresh and good, and they simply hop over a fence and provide themselves with what they want. That’s not stealing. It’s hooking, swiping. We took a few vegetables—about two cents’ worth, and a few eggs. We built a fire and fried some of the eggs, because we were hungry, and the rest we threw at horses and people passing on the road. It was a joy ride, and we were out for all the fun we could have.’

“You can’t blame the farmers for feeling kind of irritated. Sometimes they attempt to get even by burying a piece of iron pipe in the roadway dust. The auto strikes it and gets an awful bounce, and perhaps breaks some springs. Another trick is to set up nails in the dirt of the wheeltracks to puncture the auto tires. You might think the farmers would be afraid the nails would get in their horses’ feet, but a horse doesn’t put his feet down from above but gives ’em a slide that would bend the nails down.

“Oh, the owner of an auto has trouble all the time! There’s constant breaks and expense, and in two years’ time so many improvements have been made in the machine that his is out-of-date, and he wants a new one.”

NOTE.—To see Wisconsin in a pleasant and attractively varied aspect visit the shores of Green Bay, the busy manufacturing villages

along the Fox River, and the thirty-mile stretch of Lake Winnebago. Here are prosperous towns and fine farming country, and not far away is Lake Michigan. The sightseer will not perhaps wish to linger long, and I only suggest that the vicinity furnishes a good opportunity to get acquainted with a characteristic portion of the great state.

## XIV

### AN ILLINOIS VALLEY

THE settlement of northern Illinois and Wisconsin brought on the last serious Indian outbreak in the lake region. The Indians had been pushed farther and farther west by the whites until, on the banks of the Mississippi, they made a final desperate stand. Black Hawk was the Indian leader. His career had been warlike from early youth, and at the age of fifteen the scalping of an enemy had gained him the coveted right to paint, to wear feathers, and to dance the war-dance. Since that time he had been involved in all the tribal skirmishes, and had played a prominent part in the contests with the white men.

During the winter of 1832 he recruited a large force, and in the spring began a march up the Rock River Valley. This invasion excited great alarm along the frontier, and the settlers left their lonely farms and gathered in the larger villages which they hastened to protect with stockades. That an organized body of troops might be put into the field to oppose the Indians, the governor called for volunteers, and one of the first to enlist was Abraham Lincoln, who was then twenty-three years old. The troops promptly started to follow Black Hawk up the valley. There were no roads or



*The bluffs on Rock River*



bridges—only marshy trails, and the streams were swollen into torrents by the spring thaws. But the hardy backwoodsmen were used to such conditions and they marched steadily onward. Twenty-five miles above Dixon they overtook the Indians, but it was the latter who did the attacking. While the squads of soldiers were scattered without any regular order along half a mile of valley, Black Hawk and his bodyguard of some fifty braves dashed out on them with wild war-whoops. The soldiers became panic-stricken, and in spite of the efforts of their officers to rally them, the flight did not end till they reached Dixon.

After this the scene of the campaign drifted away to the north and west, and eventually the Indians were humbled and defeated.

It was the Black Hawk interest even more than the wildly suggestive name of the stream that drew me to the Rock River; and one serene, sunshiny day, when the landscape was enveloped in silvery haze I walked northward from Dixon following the stream. The river was sometimes bordered by alluvial meadows and sometimes by rugged bluffs with woodland clinging to their milder slopes. The oaks were reddening with the touch of autumn, the frost had yellowed the corn-fields, and the roadside weeds were dead and brown.

At a turn of the river, where it makes a long loop instead of pursuing a straight course, was the village of Grand Detour, a very likable little place with a grassy common in its midst where some horses were

tethered to graze. There were plenty of large trees, and most of the buildings had the humanized look that comes only with age, and a certain attractive quaintness impossible in modern and up-to-date structures. I stopped at one of the houses for a drink of water and found the old oaken bucket still in use. The well curb was on a back piazza, and I lowered the bucket by a rude wooden windlass. A public well in the street near the store used the same crude method of getting the water from the cool depths.

“That’s good water,” said an elderly man who was sitting on the store steps. “It’s hard, but I like it. Back in Vermont where I come from the water is soft. I was there last year on a visit, and after being used to our water here, that Vermont water tasted kind o’ squishy. Seemed as though it needed salting or something. My woman thought it was funny to see running water in every house there. They all had springs on the hillsides and piped the water right into the kitchens.

“This village you’re in used to be quite a burg. At one time it was bigger’n Chicago. There were a number of stores here, several blacksmith’s shops, two or three hotels, and four saloons and a plough factory, a wagon factory, a gristmill, a grain elevator—blamed if I know whether there was anything else or not. We had the best water-power on the river. This would have been the most important town in the valley if we hadn’t tried to drive too sharp a bargain with the

railroad. The railroad wanted to come here, but we said they must pay handsomely for the privilege. So they went to Dixon instead. That killed Grand Detour, and it has been dead ever since. The factories moved elsewhere, and if a building burnt down it wasn't built up, and finally the gristmill quit grinding and some of the foundation washed out and it tumbled over.

"There had been sawmills near here along Pine Crick, but they couldn't compete with big mills that started elsewhere. Yes, those big mills just eat the little ones up. They're squeezin' 'em out all over. So here we are—a little country village, and the business we were naturally entitled to has all concentrated at Dixon. They've got some walloping big cement works down there, and lots of other mills and shops."

I presently resumed my ramble up the valley with its little hills, its cultivated fields and patches of woodland, and its pleasant farmhouses. At frequent intervals along the river loomed the beautiful cliffs that give the stream its name. Once, when I had left the road and was tramping beside the river, I met a hunter. He had no game and said it had grown very scarce in recent years. "There's more back East than there is here now," he affirmed. "About all you can find is a few squirrels and rabbits. Once in a while you may get a duck, but not often, and yet thirty-five or forty years ago you could see acres of 'em on the water here."

However, the hunter knew of one wild treasure of the vicinity still left. That was a cool spring in a bushy

hollow, and thither he guided me. After we parted I returned to the river. I often saw fish leaping from the water, and in the dusk of early evening I came across a fisherman going home with a well-filled basket. "These are pike, pickerel and bass," he said. "Such fish are not easy to ketch any more. Carp have been put in the river of late years, and they knock the whey out of the other fish. Besides, they're poor eating. I can't stomach 'em. They're a darn nuisance."

But far more important commercially than the fish, are the clams that inhabit the river. The clamming season, which lasts from April 1st to October 1st, had recently closed and every little while I observed a great heap of shells on the bank. I learned something of the industry at the hotel in the town where I stopped that night. "If a man wants to go clamming," said the landlord, "he fixes up a lot of four-pronged wire hooks, fastens 'em with short strings to sticks about a dozen feet long—perhaps as many as two hundred hooks to each stick. He goes out in a little flat-bottomed boat, drags down stream, and pulls up his stick and puts it on a rack at the side of the boat. Then he takes off the clams that have clinched onto the hooks and throws 'em into the boat. On the shore he has a tank under which he builds a fire and heats water to put the clams into and make 'em open. As he takes the clams out he feels for pearls, throws the shells in a heap, and saves the clams to give to farmers to feed their hogs. I tell the farmers who use that sort of feed to fat their hogs



*A farmyard family*



that I don't want to buy no pork of 'em, but probably it's all right. They feed the hogs corn before they market 'em.

"The clam-opening job is rather odorous, and pearlin' don't attract very high grade labor. The pearl gatherers are mostly kind of shiftless—too lazy to do anything else, and they only work when they feel like it; but pearl hunting is profitable. A man can get shells enough in a day to net him four dollars, and there's the chance to make a big thing in pearls besides. One fellow in this town got a pearl that sold for eighteen hundred dollars. I've seen 'em clear as glass, and so round that when you put 'em down you could hardly keep 'em from rollin'. One was found, in another part of the state, this year, that was pink in tint and weighed fifty grains and sold for five thousand dollars. I wouldn't give five dollars for all there are in this river for my own use.

"When I was a boy I used to go pearlin' in a New England river near my home, and I had a whole teacup full of pearls at one time. I took 'em to a jeweler's store, and he said they wasn't any good. I couldn't get a nickel for 'em."

In the hotel office was a gambling machine, and a travelling man of sporty type was trying his luck at it. The cost was five cents a try, and the returns varied from nothing to one dollar in trade. The man was very persistent. He made occasional small winnings, but he kept on whirring the machine, for he would not be

satisfied with anything less than a dollar. The other persons in the room desisted from reading and irrelevant talk and watched him, commenting from time to time on his luck and relating experiences of their own with this or other gambling machines. Pretty soon a red-nosed fellow with a ragged coat came in. By this time the gambler had begun to make remarks more forceful than elegant about the machine. "That's right," said the new-comer, "stand right up and swear at it. Then you'll beat it."

Just then there was a rattle of coins, and the red-nosed man stepped eagerly closer. "Oh! you've hooked a dollar!" he exclaimed. "What did I tell you?"

Sure enough, the gambler had attained the goal of his ambition, and he went over to the counter and got a dollar's worth of cigars. By his roundabout method of obtaining them they had probably cost him two dollars. Now the red-nosed man began investing in the machine, and he, too, was seeking the maximum prize and played any lesser winnings back into the machine without a pause. All the time he kept up a running fire of comments. "My luck seems to have stopped short off," he remarked after he had seen half a dozen nickels disappear in succession without any benefit to him; "but I'm staying right by her. Here," said he, motioning to the landlord, "you're a lucky slob. Come and turn the handle for me."

The landlord accommodated him, but the result was

another blank. "She's all mixed up this morning," declared the red-nosed man. "You'd better put her out in the back room;" and he departed without making further efforts to get the coveted dollar.

After he had gone I made some remark to the effect that I thought it a pity that a man so evidently poverty-stricken should waste his money as he had, but the landlord said: "Oh, he's got plenty of money. He's one of the clammers, and he won't be contented while he has any cash left. It's only nine o'clock in the morning now, and he's just starting out to enjoy himself. By noon he'll be so drunk he can't stand up."

One evening during my stay in the town I got acquainted with an old farmer who was looking into the show window of a store. He was a loiterer getting what entertainment he could out of the sights on the street and he seemed entirely willing to linger there and elucidate his opinions of life in the region.

"We've been prospered in some ways this year," said he, "and in some ways we ain't. We had a fair first hay crop, but we didn't get no second one at all. Another thing that was both bad and good was an awful thunderstorm that come about the beginning of August. It gave the ground a needed wetting, but four barns in the neighborhood where I live was struck by lightning and burned. One was right catty-cornered to my place. However, the man it belonged to was well-off. The loss didn't cripple him any. We've got first-

rate returns on what we had to sell. Eggs have been bringing a good price right along. They ain't been lower than fourteen cents a dozen this summer, and butter has brought twenty-five and thirty cents a pound. I can remember a time when eggs was a drug on the market. You couldn't sell 'em hardly, and felt lucky to get six or eight cents. Same with butter. You'd take it to town and couldn't get nothing for it. I've sold it for ten cents a pound—good butter, too. That reminds me of a story. A woman was selling butter to a man who was buying it to ship. He was smelling and tasting of it, and she says: 'You needn't be so careful. That's nice, clean butter. I was up all night pickin' hairs out of it.'

"We're getting higher prices than we used to, but seems as though expenses had gone up faster than the income. Why, a feller could hire hands once for forty cents a day and work 'em all day and half the night. By gosh! if a hired man then, workin' out by the month, made a hundred dollars in a year, everybody was talking about it. Now you've got to pay your men thirty dollars a month, and keep a horse for 'em besides, if they want to drive anywhere; and if you get ten hours work a day out of 'em you're doin' well.

"I hired a feller last year, kind of a tramp that came along. At first I hesitated, but he urged me to try him, and finally I did. I set him to dragging in a field some eighty rods long that had been ploughed a few



*Putting in a pane of glass*



days before. At supper time he brought in the horses, and just before dark I went to see what sort of work he'd been doin'. But when I got to the field—'Thunder!' I says, 'where's my drag?' I couldn't see it anywhere. 'That's funny,' I says. 'Has anyone stolen it?' But I walked down to the far end of the field and there it was. I came to the house, and I says to the feller, 'What'd you quit way off at that far end for?'

" 'Why,' he says, 'that's where I was when it got to be six o'clock.'

"That shows you how particular they are about the length of their day, and how little intelligence they have. They don't use brains. I had a Dutchman workin' for me once, and I told him to clean out the hogpen. In order to show him how, I got over into the pen and threw out a couple of forkfuls. Then the Dutchman threw out two forkfuls and handed back the fork. He thought he'd finished his job. You can't hire hardly any men among the natives to work on the farm. We have to send off to foreign countries. There's the same difficulty in securing indoor help. If a man is lookin' for a woman he can find one; but if he's after a hired girl instead of a wife, no. Hired girls used to be plenty at a dollar to a dollar and a half a week. Now they're scarce at a dollar a day.

"The fact of the matter is that the boys and girls don't like farming; and yet you'd think it ought to be more attractive than ever before. We've all got tele-

phones to keep us in touch with neighbors and the town, and the work is done with ploughs and other machines so rigged that a man don't have to go afoot at all. The houses are fitted up pleasant, too, with nice furniture and lots of conveniences and things to enjoy. One thing you'll find in about every home is a piano. We used to all have organs, but an organ is no good now—ain't worth ten cents. Besides pianos we've got phonographs—oh, yes! we can't keep house without a phonograph. But they're gettin' past. They're not so much of a curiosity as they was. You get away from the towns, though, and the remoter and more lonely the farm is the surer you'll be to find a phonograph there.

"Farming, as things are now, has a whole lot of advantages, and yet the country fellers, just as soon as they get big enough, strike for town. Most likely they get a job in some factory. They work in it a while and go to another factory, and so on around, and that's the way they spend their lives. A man who starts in doing day's work in town never gets money ahead.

"The girls are as anxious as the boys to leave the farm. They don't know anything about cooking, and don't want to know anything about it either. I heard a girl saying the other day that she'd only marry on condition that her mother went along to live with her and do the cooking. She said she could make coffee and get a lunch, and could arrange furniture nice in a room, but that was all. Well, sir, things are getting to

be a fright. Lots of young women on our farms don't know how to make butter. Their fathers run the milk through a separator, take the cream to a creamery and buy the butter the family uses. The daughters do nothin' but set around, and their main ambition is to marry some man who'll take care of 'em.

"We Americans want all the time to work less and spend more, but you take the Germans, and they're different. The whole family works, and they stay on the land; and yet about the third generation they're as bad as the natives, and would rather starve in the town than live in plenty on a farm. The boys in the old families—them that do want to farm—go West where the land is cheaper. The rent is too high here. A man has got to scratch to pay five dollars an acre rental, and that's the charge on ordinary land in this region.

"Speakin' about expenses, it's gettin' so the farmers are buyin' automobiles right along. Of course, some of the old fellers are pretty well heeled, and it's all right for them, but for others it's extravagance. A neighbor of mine has just bought one. He's a renter who pays fifteen hundred dollars a year for his place. I wouldn't think he could afford an auto. But perhaps he can. He had an awful drove of hogs there this summer.

"Another recent auto buyer ain't one and twenty yet. He's inherited money, but he's not overly bright. He used to keep a horse for driving purposes, and he was complaining to me one day because it cost so much

to feed the animal. 'Why don't you turn your horse out to pasture?' I says.

"'Twould fade out his color,' he says, 'and I'm too proud to drive a sunburnt horse.'

"Some men are bound to have an auto even if they have to mortgage their farms to get one—they do that every day in the week. At this time of the year they're realizing on their crops and stock, and they feel a little better off than they really are, but a good many will get pinched by spring, and their autos will be on the market for sale cheap.

"It ain't every man that's fit to have an auto. There's a manufacturer in this town who runs his machine when he's fairly loony with drink, and he runs it fast, too. I'm expecting any time to hear that his auto has run ag'in' a house or climbed a tree. Fast riding is one of the failings of the autoists, and they won't give a team any more of the road than they have to. A relative of mine was out one night in an open buggy, and an auto come along with no lights. It tore up his buggy and knocked him out and went on without stopping to find out whether he needed help or was killed. He never could find out who the automobile man was so as to have him pulled and fined. The only way to do is to carry a gun. Some of the men running around in automobiles need a lesson, and they need it bad.

"But I'll say this—if a horse is frightened at automobiles his place is on the plough, or he ought to be





*Getting the mail*

sold and shipped to Chicago. A horse that's drove in a big city soon learns that the autos ain't goin' to hurt him; and in time the horses'll get used to 'em here. A few years ago our horses were scairter at bicycles than they are at autos now. But if a man has got a plug he can always sell it. There's Jews go around buyin' up horses that ain't wanted on the farms and payin' all the way from twenty-five to three hundred dollars for 'em. Good horses find a ready sale, too, and if you've got a nice team people are lookin' 'em over and chasin' after 'em all the time."

We would have talked longer, but just then the store lights were turned out and we were left in gloom on the sidewalk. In parting, my companion said: "I've been in twenty-four states, and after all I've seen elsewhere I think this is pretty good country right here. I'm satisfied with Illinois, and I'm satisfied with the Rock River Valley. But I was born and raised in a town myself, and I get lonesome on a farm. So I'm goin' to sell out and move to the village."

My final day in the region was spent for the most part in another farmland ramble, this time well back from the river. The wayside dwellings were large and stood at some distance from the public road, with generous barns and a medley of sheds and machines and straw stacks beyond them. Usually there was a windmill to supply water for the barn and also what was used in the house for cooking and drinking purposes. But near the kitchen door was an ordinary pump connected

with a cistern that caught the drainage from the roofs and supplied soft water for washing. The house was pretty sure to have shade trees about it, and often there was a small fruit orchard between it and the road. Every main highway was evidently a Rural Delivery route, and there were mail boxes on posts by the wayside wherever a byroad branched away, or a lane led to a farmhouse.

The autumn was well advanced, but as yet there had not been a severe freeze, and the drone of insects filled the air. From fences and wayside trees extended many a cobweb streamer, and I was continually catching them on my clothing or on my face, and sometimes I gathered in a spider aëronauting on his filmy thread. Once I saw a flight of perhaps half a hundred wild geese cleaving the sky southward, honking and hasty. The wind rustled over the many-acred cornfields. When I looked down on these cornfields from a hilltop they often spread about on all sides like a billowy yellow ocean.

“Lots and lots of our corn won’t be cut,” said a farmer whom I had accosted where he was digging potatoes in a jungle of weeds assisted by a young fellow and a small boy. “The price of hay rules that a good deal. If hay is scarce we house more corn fodder; but most of the corn is husked from the standing stalks, and then we turn in the cattle. The cattle are out browsing around in the cornfields every day all winter. It don’t make no difference how cold it is. We turn

'em out even if the thermometer is below zero, unless the wind blows too much, yes, you bet! But last winter we had an extra amount of snow. It come early in December and stayed into March. You notice that in the hollows there are deep, steep-sided, dry ravines torn out by the water in the spring and after heavy rains. Those got filled with snow last winter, and there was danger the cows and steers would flounder into 'em and not be able to get out. So we fed our stock in the barns. Generally they eat considerable of that field fodder. But that's according to how hungry you keep 'em. At most I don't s'pose they get more'n a quarter of it. However, they trample down what they don't eat so we can go over it with a disc harrow and cut up the stalks enough to plough under. You'll see some good-sized fields of corn here—thirty, forty and even fifty acres."

It was very warm in the clear sunshine on the dusty road, and when I was on my way back to town in the afternoon I was glad to be asked to ride by a butcher who overtook me with his cart. It was a rather primitive two-horse vehicle, its sides shut in by black curtains, and having a rude box at the rear that contained the meat. One horse was white, the other brown. They jogged soberly along carrying their heads level with their backs. The driver was smoking his pipe. At his feet was a stout handbell he used to summon his customers to the roadside, but he had made the last call on his route and we went on without stopping.

"It's hot today," he observed, "but this is nothing compared with summer. The thermometer goes up over a hundred sometimes, and you get wringin' wet with sweat, just walkin'. But I'm out with my cart four days a week no matter what the weather is, and each of those days I cover about thirty-five miles. I have to be up getting ready at half-past two, and I start at four. That's workin' for a livin'; but if I didn't cover these routes someone else would. There are two, and I go over 'em twice each week.

"This is a nice town where my shop is, or it was until this year. It voted license at the last election, and now the place has six saloons, and they pay a thousand dollars license apiece. That means a big lot of money is spent to support 'em. It's astonishing how many deads there are since the saloons opened up. One doctor had four cases of delirium tremens at the same time. Money was much easier under no-license, and it was no trouble to collect your bills. You rarely saw a drunken man. There was no saloons, and so the fellows didn't see liquor, and thought nothing about it and didn't know they wanted it. What liquor was drank had to be sneaked in, and much as a dozen bootleggers was arrested. There never was a town yet that license benefited. I don't mind a fellow's takin' a drink of beer or whiskey now and then, but when he stands up at the bar and drinks more'n he would of water there's something wrong."

We presently reached town and I found a game of

quoits in progress near the railroad station. The players and onlookers were mostly a lot of ancients with various antique trims of whiskers. There were trees and sheds that afforded shade, and the sheds added a touch of lively color to the scene, for they were be-dizened with circus posters. Some boxes and blocks and a board propped up on stones furnished seats. The majority of the onlookers sat silent but interested, and most of the commenting was done by a fat man who fairly bubbled over with excitement and enthusiasm. Here are some fragments that indicate the tenor of his remarks:

“Ah! that’s a good one! but don’t you laugh before you’re through. Now that there you can slop off. ’Tain’t much use if you have a slide. It was too hard—that last one. They both count now—and now they don’t. Five to three! There, you’ve got a ringer; don’t hit it. That was a sticker. That’s the kind! If you don’t laugh I will for you. Now you’re just even—ten apiece. Well, this is a pretty close game, aw, yes! You ought to go out now. If you pitch close enough, you can; but that won’t do. Well, sir, I don’t know whether it will or not, by jingoes!”

And when I went away on my train several of the men were stooping intent around the quoits while one of them with a little stick measured the distance of two opposing quoits that were so equally near the pin it was doubtful which would count.

## 302    Highways and Byways of the Great Lakes

NOTE.—The Rock River is notably charming, with its magnificent bordering cliffs and patches of woodland intermitting with pastures and cultivated fields. Perhaps it can nowhere be seen to better advantage than in the dozen miles above Dixon. The picturesque clam industry adds to the attraction of the stream, and there is much of interest in the village and farmlife; and besides there is the historic interest that comes from the fighting that occurred here in the Black Hawk War.

## XV

### TIPPECANOE

I wanted to see the Tippecanoe battlefield, partly because of the fame of the battle, partly because the euphonious name appealed to my fancy and was suggestive of many varied charms. The battle occurred seven miles north of the present city of La Fayette in Indiana. It was possible to go to the spot from La Fayette by steam cars or trolley, but I preferred to walk. The road took me along the banks of the Wabash and at first was uninterestingly suburban. Presently, however, I came to a beautiful piece of woodland, which seemed to be a genuine fragment of the ancient forest that used to cover all the northeastern portion of our country, but, alas! it was being cut off. I could hear the choppers' axes, the voices of men who with their teams were dragging out the logs; and there, beside the road, was an engine and a saw. Nature's temple was being converted into ugly piles of boards and beams.

On a knoll among the trees a tent had been erected, and here most of the workers would live all winter. A stovepipe elbowed out at one end of the tent, and as I was looking around in its vicinity a woman who served as cook came out to get some wood for the fire. The

twinkle of a birdsong of more than ordinary sweetness had just come to my ears, and I asked the woman if she knew what bird it was I heard.

"It's a redbird," she replied. "A few stay here the year round, but they're most plenty in spring. There's a good many birds and little animals in these woods. A fox squirrel and a gray squirrel live in that big oak just down the hill. They play there and bark at us. There's lots of hollers in the trees on this track of land for the squirrels to build in. We often see rabbits, and now and then one of the men'll slip out and kill a partridge. This is the last fine timber left in the region. It's a beautiful scenery, I think."

I went on up into the woods to where a squad of men were at work, some felling trees and chopping off the branches, some sawing the trunks into logs, or, if the trees were small, sawing off short lengths that could be shaped with a broadaxe into railroad ties. Two little girls, daughters of the cook, were there watching the men and sometimes helping saw. As yet, not much of the forest had been destroyed, and some of the smaller trees were being left with the idea that the deforested tract might sell for building lots at a higher price if a little of its vernal character was retained. So the aspect of the half devastated woodland with its scattered workers was idyllic rather than otherwise.

When I returned to the road beside the Wabash I went on northward, and my next pause was to speak with three men who were repairing the telephone line.



*Hewing out railroad ties*



I asked them about the battlefield, and one of them said: "If you're interested in that old fight, you want to see the Prophet's Rock. You'll find it in the woods right by the road two miles above here. It's a pretty good-sized chunk, and juts out of the hillside like a shelf. Everybody goes to see that, and those who have cameras and are jerkin' pictures never fail to jerk the shadow of the Prophet's Rock.

"My grandfather was one of the first settlers at Battleground—that's what they call the village which is close by where the fighting took place. He and Uncle 'Rastus Barnes and a few others come here about the same time in 1832. I've heard him say he could go out from his house half a mile in any direction and be sure to see deer. It was the Indian custom to let fires run through the woods every fall to keep down the underbrush and give the deer good grazing. So there was nothing but big timber, like a grove, and he had to go two miles to find a stick small enough for a sled tongue. Those early comers might have got much better land by settling on the prairies, but they were used to being in a timber country where there were springs, and to settle on the prairie would have seemed to them like going out of the world."

I soon left the telephone men at their work, and about an hour later I arrived at Battleground. The place is a snug little trading center with a group of stores that have in front of them lines of posts connected by chains or iron rods for the convenient hitching of

the teams of country customers. There were a number of right-angled streets bordered by excellent cement walks. The dwellings were only slightly back from these walks and elbowed each other quite closely. They were tree-shadowed and very tidy with lawns at the front and gardens behind. Few of them aspired to a height of more than a story and a half, and only the mildest attempts at architectural adornment were in evidence, and these seldom successful. Indeed, the lack of ostentation was one of the charms of the place. There was no rivalry to outdo each other in the home buildings. Here, it would seem, was a village where the people found happiness in simple pleasures, and where comfort and contentment were universal.

Immediately south of the village is a grove, stoutly fenced about, and containing a slender, graceful memorial shaft of granite that towers above the treetops. The grove occupies a tongue of land that is a continuation of the village plateau, and that has a considerable extent of low ground on three sides of it. Here the battle was fought on November 7, 1811.

The territory of Indiana, with a population not exceeding six thousand, and at that time only ten years old, had been suffering much from the incursion of the savage warriors on the scattered white settlements. In August, Governor William Henry Harrison called for troops to get together to punish the Indians, and they assembled to the number of about a thousand at what is now Terre Haute. Some of the men were

United States Infantry, and a few came from Kentucky, but two-thirds were militia of the territory. On the high west bank of the Wabash, near where it is joined by the Tippecanoe, several hundred Indians had gathered under the leadership of the famous Tecumseh and his brother. The latter had assumed the functions of a prophet, and the camp was called "The Prophet's Town."

Against this town General Harrison moved, and on the evening of November 6th he arrived in sight of it. Tecumseh had gone south to stir up and bring other Indians to assist against the whites, and his brother who was in sole charge, sent a messenger to meet the invaders. This messenger carried a white flag on a pole. When he was brought before General Harrison he said: "Why do you come here with your army? We have in our town none but women and children. Go into camp, and we will treat with you on the morrow."

He seems to have been believed; none of the army expected a battle, and the Kentuckians grumbled and swore because the prophet was so peaceful. They built their campfires on the narrow end of the plateau, and the Indians standing on a ridge a quarter mile to the west counted the fires and knew the exact location of all parts of the army. At four in the morning a drizzling rain had begun to fall, when a picket saw a suspicious movement in the grass and weeds in front of him, and he fired his musket. It had been the Indian purpose to shoot the pickets with their silent arrows

and then rush forward with tomahawk and scalping-knife on the slumbering army. Fortunately the troops had been ordered to sleep in line of battle with their weapons at their sides, and when the report of the sentry's gun rang through the camp they were quickly on their feet standing shoulder to shoulder. The savages made their rush, and the awful Indian yell resounded on all sides of the encampment, but they found the whites prepared. They were repelled and continued the assault from behind trees and from among the branches, some with bows and arrows, some with powder and ball. Several times they attempted another charge with frantic shrieks and screams, but each time were driven back in confusion.

Meanwhile the prophet had gone off across a swampy level beyond harm's reach, and standing on the rock that projected from the ridge was working his charms and praying for victory. He had assured his followers that the Great Spirit would change the whites' powder into ashes and sand; but daylight came and the whites still held their ground. Then they made a bayonet charge, and the disheartened Indians fled across the swamp. Thirty-seven of the whites had been killed and one hundred and fifty-one wounded. An Indian woman who was captured later said that one hundred and ninety-seven of the Indian warriors were missing.

Harrison had won, yet his position was critical. He had very little flour, and no meat; for the few cattle he had brought along had been either driven off by the





*Saturday afternoon in town*

Indians or had been stampeded by the noise of the battle. What saved him was the fact that the Indians made no attempt to harrass him. They had abandoned their village near the mouth of the Tippecanoe, two miles northeast of the battlefield, and had gone from the region in a panic. On the day after the engagement some of the cattle were recovered and the whites took possession of the Indian town. There they found stores of beans and corn, and after they had taken what they could transport they burned all the huts and supplies that the Indians were treasuring for winter, and went their way.

This battle of Tippecanoe was more critically important than would be thought from the comparatively small number concerned in it. Never again did a purely Indian army combat the whites east of the Mississippi. Had they won, the horrors the defenceless frontier must have experienced would have been appalling. But now they were disheartened and their power was broken. When news of the victory was disseminated, then began the advance of the settlers, and their covered wagons appeared in all parts of the territory. Scarce had the smoke of battle cleared away when there was heard throughout the land the stroke of the woodman's ax and the voice of the ploughman.

But what of Tecumseh? He had counseled the prophet to avoid an engagement until he returned. To quote a local resident—"Tecumseh was mad. This 'ere brother of his had got the tribe licked while

he was gone. So he took the prophet by the hair of the head and gave him a jerk or two to show what he thought of him. For a while the Indians had to live on horseflesh, food was so scarce."

The village of Battleground is perhaps seen at its liveliest on a Saturday evening. I found it had quite a holiday aspect then. The week's work was ended, and the people were ready to relax and turn their minds to other things. They flocked in from the country, and at the hitching-places the teams were as thick as they could stand. Groups of men gathered here and there on the sidewalks, and there was much visiting among those who were trading in the stores, and the barber's shop was an especially busy place. Over many of the stores were lodge rooms, and these were brightly lighted and suggestive of social good cheer. One institution that the village supports is a restaurant. It was in a rude little building a single story in height. Meals were served in a back room, and there was a front room where were counters and meagerly stocked shelves, and you could buy ice cream, candy, chewing gum, and some other small wares. Two helpings of ice cream were the usual requirement. Customers were free to sit on the stools in front of the counters and chat, and spit on the floor as much as they pleased. Out in front, under a porch roof, were benches for the convenience of other loiterers, and at the rear was a clump of trees and a pump where the leisurely also liked to linger.

In a grove, between the residential portion of the village and the battlefield park, was a camp meeting hamlet with its big audience hall, its dining pavilion, "young people's chapel," and short crowded streets of cottages. On Sunday morning, while in this vicinity, I accosted a man who was sitting on the piazza of a house just outside the grounds and asked about the camp meeting. He replied, but before going into details mentioned that he was not well—guessed he had lung trouble. He coughed pretty continuously in a debilitated sort of way. "When you're troubled like I am," said he, "the doctors tell you to sit out and lay out and everything else. That's why I'm here on the piazza. You want to know about this camp meeting? It's one of the biggest in the state. People come from St. Louis and all the way around to attend the meetin's and spend a few weeks here. Every cottage is full, and lots of folks drive in from the country to spend the day. Why, man! I've seen buggies here cl'ar up and down the road on each side as thick as they could stand, and only space left between to drive through. The horses were unhitched and put in village barns. Sundays are the worst time. It's then that the most turn out, and they just push and crowd all day. You see that little shed next to the street in the corner of our yard. One Sunday, in that shed, I took in a hundred and ten dollars selling ice cream, lemonade, and pops. They make good long days of it in this camp meetin' business. There's a bugle blows at half-past six to get the people

out to the first prayer service, and they keep goin' way into the night.

"This is a religious town, camp meetin' or no camp meetin'. Two of our ministers get a thousand dollars a year, and the other six hundred—twenty-six hundred dollars a year paid out for preachers, and the place hasn't got over seven hundred inhabitants. But the people are prosperous, and I don't think there's an empty house in town. You just go out tomorrow morning and try to hire a man. You'll find 'em all busy, and you can't get one for love or money; or if you can, every man you strike wants twenty-five cents an hour. The farmers can't hardly get help at all.

"Quite a lot of business is done here—oh, by golly; you bet! One hardware store does a thousand dollars a month. A good many village people like to go down to La Fayette on Saturday evening. It's a pleasant ride, and they want to have a little fun and get some beer, I guess. This is a dry town, and you never hear of a person getting into trouble, or anything like that. There's no nicer little place in the state. On Sunday the people mostly go to church and Sunday-school in the morning, and rest in the afternoon. There'll be a ball game somewhere on the outskirts, but they never allow no shooting around here on Sunday, and they don't go fishing on that day,

"Paw and maw will be going to church by and by, but I shan't go. The preachers are the biggest hypocrites on earth to my notion. All they care for is to run



*Returning from the spring house*



down the churches that don't belong to their own denomination. They bullyrag one another and claim their own particular sect has got the only true form of religion. Of course there's a heaven and a hell—the Bible teaches that; but each denomination seems to have a different heaven and hell. Are there half a dozen heavens and hells? You can't tell me any such thing. This chewing the rag, and this humbug business, I can't stand.

“I used to belong to the Christian church. Perhaps I do yet. I help support it, though I don't attend services, and they don't never throw anyone out who keeps up his dues. So I guess they'll bury me when I die. If they don't they can feed me to the hogs. It's all the same to me.

“The man who contributes liberally to the church is the sort of man the preachers like. Money's all they care for, and a feller can do anything if he only pays. There's churchmen here that go to La Fayette and sneak into a saloon way at the end of Main Street for fear someone will see 'em. But that ain't my way. I go in at the front door every time, and it don't matter who sees me. If I was walkin' along on La Fayette Main Street with a preacher and wanted a drink I'd go right into a saloon and get it. But I never was teetotally drunk in my life and never was arrested.

“One thing I'd like to know is how the lawyers can get up and lie and plead cases they know are not honest,

and be welcomed to the kingdom of heaven. Lots of lawyers will lie for five dollars and do any mean trick for ten or twelve dollars, and then get up and talk in prayer-meetin'. That's what hurts the churches today—lettin' these lyin' pups get in there and run things when ever'body knows what they are. People ought to take a rope in church and lasso such fellers—jerk their blamed heads off. Now that's my belief about such things."

Earlier in the morning I had observed that more or less work of a minor nature was being done. The small boys had on overalls and were busy at little tasks about their homes; a man tethered a horse to feed by the wayside, and from each house a woman or girl came forth and swept the piazza and steps and then the walk clear out to the street. Now the bells were ringing their summons to church, and there began to appear on the walks processions of sober-garmented elders, and sedate persons of middle age, and gay-garbed little folk wending their way toward the meeting-houses; and frequent family teams came jogging in from the country and were hitched near the edifices. But in the neighborhood of the stores and restaurant were a considerable number of loitering young men. The butcher's shop was temporarily open for business, and I asked a man who came out from this shop with a parcel in his hands if the young fellows we could see thereabouts were planning to go to church.

"No," said he, "very few of this crowd go to church.

They'll loaf around here and tell lies all day. You'll find 'em here every pleasant Sunday."

We chatted for a while, and he told me his name—Warren—Joe Warren—and said he had a farm a mile or two out of the village. Then I told him my name, and of my interest in that historic region. We had hardly exchanged these courtesies when he called to a man who was walking past and introduced me, observing that he wanted me to know him because he had always lived there and could give me a good deal of information. "Oh! he can tell about things way back," said Joe as we were shaking hands. "He's old. You wouldn't think it to look at him, but he is. He's been married three times. Yes, sir, he's living with his third wife. However, you can talk with him some other time. I'll tell you what we'll do this morning. There's my team," and he pointed to a fat pony attached to a top buggy—"you come along with me and I'll show you where the prophet's town used to stand."

So we left the much-married, youthful-looking ancient, and drove out of the village. After Joe had stopped at his house to leave the meat with his mother we followed a devious byway toward the river. Around us were big farm fields, mostly fenced with wire, but rail fences were not entirely of the past, and sometimes there was a thorny osage hedge. Now and then we encountered a gate, and Joe got out and opened it, and when I had driven through, he shut it behind us. At length we came to the site of the old Indian camp in a

brushy pasture on a high plateau overlooking the Wabash.

The day was hot and bright, and the pasture was not an inviting place to linger. Joe said we would go and make a call at a neighboring farmhouse where lived a renter named Morris. As we approached the dwelling we encountered the renter near an outlying gate feeding a sow with a following of little pigs. He was gray and had passed three score, but age had not yet subdued his hearty, big-framed vigor. We went on and he walked beside the buggy until we entered the farmyard. There we found a hitching-place amid a medley of wagons and tools and woodpiles. When we had tied the horse we entered the houseyard. This was almost bare of grass, and the earth was hard trodden by human feet and those of a numerous colony of fowls. The house was a reasonably good farm structure, but some of the outbuildings were of logs—survivals of a more primitive period. They stood on the verge of a wooded slope that descended steeply to a “bayou,” and beyond that was more woodland through which I could catch glimpses of the river.

We had gone to the rear of the house. Probably the front door was never used except for a wedding or a funeral. A brisk elderly woman smoking a pipe, appeared at the back door, and exclaimed: “Well, my God! Joe, why didn’t you bring granny? It’s a mean trick of you to come without her.”

"I had this gentleman with me today," replied Joe, "but I'll sure fetch mother next time."

Mr. Morris brought out some chairs for us, set them in the shadow of the henhouse and told us to make ourselves comfortable. He also provided chairs for himself and his wife. Two brawny, red-faced sons shortly afterward joined us and seated themselves on the steps of an adjoining shed. We were soon chatting about old times, and Mr. Morris said: "When I come here in 1862 'twan't no such country as it is now, I can tell you that, though it was already right sharply settled. We built a little log cabin 'bout the size of our present kitchen, and for heating and cooking we had an open fireplace. Now you've got to have a base-burner to be anywhere along in the crowd; but there's no use talkin'—it's not as healthy as the good old fireplace."

"Yes," said Mrs. Morris, "the fireplace was what I cooked in when we was first married, and at one side of it was a big oven in which I baked the best bread that you ever tasted."

"In my boyhood days comin' up," said Mr. Morris, "we had biscuit on Sunday and corn bread the balance of the time."

"I don't know as I could make corn bread now," remarked Mrs. Morris. "I forgit, but I used to make it all the samee, and if I was to make a pone today such as I used to make, you would never be willing to leave here till it was eaten up."

"I'll tell yer," commented Mr. Morris, "we had

just as much to eat in old times as we do now. There was plenty of deer here yet in '62, and wild turkeys—lots of 'em. But I used to hunt with a brich-loader that would bust my nose every time I shot it. The gun would jump and kick and hit me in the face in spite of all I could do. There used to be wild hogs, and we'd go out and shoot 'em in butcherin' time. 'Bout the best place to find 'em was up the river a few miles at what was called Hog P'int. We had all the fish we wanted. My goodness alive! we'd ketch that length of bass," and he held his hands a considerable space apart. "We used to ketch these here salmon, too. Once in a while we run onto a salmon, now. That reminds me of a time I got some fish from a net that was set out of season. There were three of us fellers together when we found the net. I and Cunningham were bullheaded things, and Bill Wesley was kind of a dare-devil, too. Besides, we didn't think the owner of the net would pester us much, even if he caught us, because he was breakin' the law to set it. So we drew it in and tuck all the fish we could carry off."

"We had twelve sunfish for breakfast yesterday," said Mrs. Morris. "I rolled 'em in meal and fried 'em in fat, and the meat was so tender it was fairly drippin' off the bones. They were fine."

"Mrs. Morris," said Joe, "do you know what I'd have done if I'd known you had them fish? I'd have come over and stole 'em. Say, I'll bet they were nice!"

One of the boys brought out from the shed a leather

shot pouch, and a powder receptacle that was made of a cowhorn. "Before Dad and Ma'm were married," said he, "Dad lived way yonder in Kentucky, and he got this powder horn and shot pouch there from the Indians. I've often hearn him tellin' that they are more than a hunderd years old."

"Since I come here I've never seen any Indians but once," said Mr. Morris. "That once was when a party of twelve passed through on their way to Washington. They wa'n't at all wild in their clothes. Oh, by jinks! they was just as well trimmed up as you are, or any other man. They stopped here by the Wabash. One of 'em said he could swim across the river under water, and it was good and wide there, too. He flipped into that water like a duck, and the next thing we saw his head come up way over at the other shore. The rest couldn't do it. The race was running out of 'em, but he was a full-blood yet. He could swim better than the other eleven, and he could run further. He beat any man I ever laid eyes on in going."

"Right under that southeast corner of the house is the skileton of an Indian," remarked Mrs. Morris. "The men found it when they was digging for the foundation."

"What in the Old Nick did they leave it thar for?" inquired one of the boys.

"They didn't like to be disturbin' a dead man," replied Mrs. Morris.

"I reckon you feel nervous sometimes when you happen to think of him," said Joe.

"No," declared Mrs. Morris, "it never makes me a bit scairt. I never did anything to that dead man, and I'm a woman that lives after the Lord."

"If you'd told Al' Jones about that skileton he'd have give yer fifty dollars for it," one of the boys affirmed. "He's got his house full of curiosities and ain't satisfied yit."

"The more Indian relics he can git the better he's pleased," said Mrs. Morris. "I've give Albert a double handful of arrowheads."

"And there's old Judge Dehart—I'll bet he's got ten bushel of 'em," said the son. "He's just as fierce after relics as Al' is, and he has been at it longer."

"I got just one fault to find with old times," remarked Mr. Morris. "We had chills and fever, and we had plenty, oh, you bet! The malaria got nine out of ten of us in the fall of the year. It used to be a desperate thing. You'd see an old feller settin' around with his back humped up and an overcoat on, right out in the sun in the hottest place he could find, and shivering. Then, in a little while, he'd be burnt up with fever. But it was a disease that could be cured. My daughter had a lump in her side that they called an ager cake. We thought she was goin' to die, but we took her to ole Doc Burton, and with only two treatments he knocked that thar ager cake all asunder. He





*Ready to start for work*

didn't tell what the medicine was, but it must have been some kind of p'ison. I had the chills—"

"Yes," interrupted Mrs. Morris, "Daddy had chills, and I had the 'zemy; and r'aly I hain't got over that 'zemy to this day, though I've tuck all kinds of medicine, pretty near."

"But I broke my chills," resumed Mr. Morris. "I had 'em every other day until I'd had three, and I just thought they was goin' to kill me. By jolly! I was no account whatever. When the fourth ager day come I e't a little bite, put on an old blue soldier overcoat I had, and told my woman I was goin' to town. Then I tuck a quart bottle and went to the woods and about half filled the bottle with quaking asp bark, green, right off the tree. After that I jumped on my horse, and away I went. As soon as I got to the store I carried in my bottle of bark and says, 'Give me a pint of good whiskey in that.'"

"The clerk poured in the whiskey and I paid him and stepped right outside of the door and drank nearly all of it. Afterward I mounted my horse and started for home, and that's all I knew until the next morning. Then I found that I was lyin' by the roadside. I got up and looked at myself and I was the dirtiest man on the face of the earth. I had bowdaciously puked all over my clothes."

"Did you puke or vomit?" asked Mrs. Morris with a humorous twinkle in her eyes and an implication in her voice that his expression was rather inelegant.

"I puked," he reiterated, "and my overcoat was so bedaubed I left it right thar. The horse had gone on home, and I'd got to walk. I was awful thirsty. Thar was a little of the asp bark and whiskey mixture left in my bottle, but I couldn't bear it. Near by was a swampy pool, and I knelt down and blew the green scum away and drank that water."

"Didn't you hear me hollerin' for you while you was lyin' thar by the roadside?" questioned his wife. "I hollered till about midnight."

"No," he answered, "I didn't even hear the prairie wolves howlin', and they were just as thick as could be, but they didn't pester me none."

"They won't bother a dead man," remarked one of the sons. "They'll go right on."

"Prairie wolves are a little yaller concern," Mr. Morris continued. "Out in a lonely country they'll foller a man and make out like they're goin' to do things, but they don't. One night I went to town and stayed till nine or ten o'clock."

"What was you doin' thar so late?" Mrs. Morris inquired.

"Havin' a little fun, that's all," he answered.

"Tell it straight," she cautioned. "Say you got drunk."

"Well," said he, "I left town with a meal sack full of beef on the horse in front of me. It was six miles to whar I lived. About half way the wolves commenced crowding around. I s'pose the smell of the meat at-

tracted 'em, and terrectly seem like thar was a thousand. They were yelpin' this way and that and every way, and they followed me plumb home. They were right thar when I put up my horse and went in the house with the meat. Them times we didn't care for prairie wolves any more than for dogs. The old settlers here wa'n't afraid of the devil. At that day and age of the world men in this new country didn't propose to be run over by anyone or anything."

About this time some relatives of the family arrived, and soon afterward Joe and I took our departure.

On the following day I decided I must see the Tippecanoe River before I left the region, and I felt assured I would find a wild and satisfying beauty along a stream with so delectable a name. I was much encouraged, after leaving the village and the highroad and following a lane for quite a distance, to find on ahead the most idyllic farm home I had seen for a long time. The dwelling stood on a knoll, under a group of large shadowing trees, just beyond a wide but shallow brook, and down the slope beside the stream was a neat little spring house where the family kept their milk and cream and whatever else was better stored in a cool place. Not far away the brook was overhung by trees, and there a herd of cattle had gathered and stood in the shallows contentedly chewing their cuds and flicking at the flies with their tails. The road to the house went directly through the water, but a long plank was laid down to afford a passage for persons on foot. I ob-

served that this bridge was also much used by some pigs that roamed about in the pasture. They seemed to think it was for their especial benefit, and they would walk soberly across it, even if they came out of the middle of the stream to do so, and then wended their way back to midstream from the other side.

At the house I obtained directions, and went on across two or three big grass fields and entered a vast expanse of corn. The corn was marvellously tall and stout-stalked, and might have been attractive if it had not been so broken down and tipped over by the winds and rains. It was fully ripe, and the leaves were brown and dead, and the stalks lay at every sort of slant. Many were flat on the ground. As a result the walking was decidedly arduous, but what made matters ten times worse was the abundance of weeds, and especially the clinging vines that festooned and tangled the stalks. The majority of the weeds were of a savage, fighting clan armed with prickles, and I collected a great variety of their barbed weapons on my clothing. The wild cucumber troubled me most. Their spines were both sharp and slender, and, like porcupine quills, were bound to keep on in the direction they started.

I was heartily thankful when I got through the corn to a line of trees that I thought indicated the river was not far away. But here, to my dismay, I was confronted by battalions of horseweeds, growing as thick as they could stand and spindling up to a height of eight or ten feet. I was half minded to turn back. However, after

a little deliberation, I began to break a path through the jungle. The ground was rough, and I encountered snags and unexpected holes and steep-sided muddy ravines. Besides, the nettles stung my hands, and, as if that was not enough, some mosquitoes appeared on the scene and began jabbing me. Enveloped by the rank undergrowth amid the scattered trees I could see only a few feet ahead so that I did not glimpse the river until I was right on its verge. And what was the reward of all my toil and swelter? A roily, sluggish stream, bordered by perpendicular mudbanks that were eaten away by freshets, and overgrown with thickets of weeds and bushes. In this rank environing tangle grew a straggling of tall trees, some of which had been undermined and had fallen into the water. There were no stones or grass along shore to give a touch of either vigor or grace. I turned away disappointed, retraced my steps through the riverside jungle, following the narrow trail I had previously broken, and presently emerged into the cornfield. I kept on, dodging about among the tangled stalks and belligerent weeds as best I could, and finally escaped to the mowing land, a good deal exhausted and the worse for wear. As my route to the village passed Joe Warren's house I stopped on his porch to rest, and related to him my experiences.

"Well, now, I'll tell you," said he, "you take it on those bottoms, the soil is a sandy loom, and very little wind will blow the corn over. But the corn is seldom ever damaged that way. Whatever is blown over early

in the season will raise up, but after it gets ears on it those hold the stalks down. Then the morning-glory vines and the pea vines and gopher vines and wild cucumber vines grow over them and so tangle the stalks together that dog gone if you can't almost take hold at one corner and shake the whole field!

"I don't like those cucumber vines a darn bit. A field overgrown with 'em is the meanest thing to shuck corn in, and it's hard to get men to work in such a field. Those prickles go right through cotton gloves, and they'll go through your trousers; and when they get into your flesh they break off and make festering sores. The huskers like to wear overalls that have been used all summer by some house painter. If the cloth is well daubed with paint the prickles won't go through.

"We can't get rid of the weeds in the bottoms because the floods bring on a fresh lot of seed every year. But we raise our heaviest corn there. Oh, that land is immense—it's rich! The floods keep it fertilized with deposits of sediment, and you can just corn that land right along. Sometimes we have a fall flood. That's bad, for if the corn gets well soaked it sours and softens and is hardly fit for hog feed. So we always aim to jerk out that corn in the bottoms the first thing.

"The bottom land brings a good price. If any was for sale it would be about a hundred and a quarter an acre I suppose. But you won't find any man on this road so dissatisfied that he wants to sell. There's something wrong with the farmer who doesn't make money

when the crops are fetchin' the prices they do now. Even a renter can get rich here, and pay eight dollars an acre a year for the land, too."

"By the way," said I, "what does the word Tippecanoe mean?"

"It means Buffalo Fish," replied Joe.

"If I'd known that I never would have gone to look at it," said I. "But I had imagined it meant River of Paradise or something of that sort."

"Well," responded Joe, "if you'd gone up a few miles farther you'd have found it an awful pretty stream. There it flows between clay bluffs and hills, and the bottom of the river is all gravel and rocks, and the water is perfectly clear."

The sun was dipping low in the west, and long cool shadows were stretching eastward, and my companion remarked that he must go and look for his cow. "It'll soon be dark," he added, "and she has a habit of getting off in the brush at the far side of the pasture."

So Joe and I parted, and late the same day I took a train that carried me homeward, and my rambles in the region of the Great Lakes were ended.

NOTE.—The battlefield of Tippecanoe is a hundred miles almost due south from Chicago. It is in a delightful rural region near the head of navigation on the Wabash River, and the vicinity is not so changed but that one finds it easy to reproduce in fancy the old fight. It is a pleasure to loiter in the adjacent village, and if one's taste runs to camp meetings you can come in midsummer and find such a meeting in full blast, and the grounds only separated from

## 328 Highways and Byways of the Great Lakes

the famous battlefield by a fence. The farm region adjacent has considerable attractiveness, and I suggest that it would be of interest to one unused to this western region to go back from the river far enough to see what was originally prairie in contrast to the wooded land that bordered the streams.

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